
GRAMMAR

PREPOSITION



PEARSON

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TO THE STUDENT

Prepositions are used all time in English, but it is often difficult to know which preposition to use. Prepositions are 'little words' but they carry a lot of meaning. It is important to choose the right preposition or you may say the wrong thing. If you want to understand better how to use preposition in English, the tests in this book will help.

There are eight sections in the book. They will help you to:

- ✿ Use preposition to express relationships in time (on *Friday*, **at** *noon*), and place (at *the movies*, **across** *the street*);
- ✿ Understand how prepositions are used with particular verbs, adjectives and nouns;
- ✿ Test your knowledge of compound prepositions (*in spite of*), and of phrasal verbs which use prepositions (*look after*, *bump into*).

Each section begins with a short explanation of the points being tested, and many tests also have tips (advice) on how to do the tests and what to look out for. Do read these explanations and tips; they are there to help you.

To make the book more challenging and more fun, many different kinds of tests are used, including sentence transformation, gap-filling, crosswords, jokes and cartoons. There is a key at the back of the book so that you can check your answers.

There is no magic formula for learning prepositions. When deciding which preposition to use, always consider meaning. For example, a common meaning of *with* is *using*, so it is logical to hit a nail *with* a hammer, cut an apple *with* a knife, etc.

When you come across a prepositional phrase which is new to you, it is a good idea to learn it in a context. So, for example, don't simply learn on *purpose*; put it in a sentence *It wasn't an accident; I did it **on purpose**.*

SECTION 1: PREPOSITIONS OF TIME AND PLACE

This section looks at the use of prepositions to show the relationship between people, things and events.

Prepositions can express relationships.

Example: TIME< answering the question 'When?'

Let's meet **on** Friday, **at** three o'clock and chat for a while.

They can express relationships in SPACE, answering the question 'Where'? e.g.
He lived alone **in** an old house **on** the edge of the village.

They can also express many other kinds of relationships such as PURPOSE, e.g. You ought to have a dog **for** company, POSSESSION, e.g. The other side **of** the garden, and RESULT, e.g. a verdict of death **from** drowning.

1: DESCRIBING A ROOM

Look at the drawing and fill in the missing prepositions and prepositional phrases in the sentences below. Choose from the following but only use each word or phrase once.

ABOVE BEHIND BELOW BETWEEN IN IN FRONT OF
NEXT TO ON OPPOSITE TO THE LEFT OF TO THE RIGHT OF
UNDER

1. The sofa is opposite the armchair.
2. The clock is _____ the mantelpiece.
3. The mobile phone is _____ the table.
4. The painting is _____ the fireplace.
5. The bookcase is _____ the fireplace.
6. The glasses are _____ the bottle.
7. The flowers are _____ the vase.
8. The coffee table is _____ the sofa and the armchair.
9. The cat is _____ the armchair.
10. The CD-player is _____ the TV.
11. The clock is _____ the painting.
12. The book is _____ the vase of flowers.

2: FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

Jane has written to her friend Lucy, giving her instructions on how to reach her house. Look at the map and fill in the missing prepositions in the letter.

Dear Lucy,

Thanks for your letter. It's quite easy to find my house. When you get (1) off the bus, start walking (2) _____ the High Street (3) _____ the church. (4) _____ the way, you'll pass a pub called The King's Head and a telephone box. Just (5) _____ the telephone box, (6) the left, is a car park. Go (7) _____ the car park and continue (8) _____ the footpath that goes (9) _____ Box Wood. Turn right (10) the signpost and walk (11) _____ the river bank until you come (12) a bridge. Don't go (13) _____ the bridge but keep on walking until you reach a cottage called Hillside. (14) _____ the cottage is a narrow road that leads (15) _____ a farm. Follow the road and turn left just before you reach the farm. (16) _____ the end of this road is a row of houses. I live (17) _____ the middle house. It's number 10 and has a lamppost (18) _____ it. If I'm not in, go (19) _____ the back where you 'll find a spare key to the front door (20) _____ the right (21) _____ the back door, (22) _____ a flowerpot. I hope you don't get lost!

I am looking forward to seeing you again.

Lots of love

Jane

3. A QUESTION OF TIMING

Read the story and fill in each blank with a suitable preposition of time.

My parents met (1) during the Second World War (2) _____ August, 1943, to be precise. My father was home (3) _____ leave from the front, and he had decided to spend the first week with an aunt in Liverpool. He hadn't seen her (4) _____ several years, even though she had brought him up (5) _____ his mother's death.

Liverpool is not the most beautiful city in the world, but it can be very pleasant (6) _____ summertime, especially early (7) _____ the morning. (8) _____ this particular morning, however, my father was in no mood to enjoy the sunrise over the River Mersey. His train had left London (9) _____ time, but (10) _____ the time it got to Crewe, it was already three and a half hours (11) _____ schedule. So he was in a bad mood and very tired (12) _____ arrival at the station in Liverpool.

But something happened (13) _____ minutes of his arrival that changed not only his mood, but also his whole life. Feeling thirsty (14) _____ his long journey, he decided to go and have a cup of tea in the station café. Typically, it was shut (15) _____ that early hour. A notice on the door read 'Opening hours: (16) _____ 7 am (17) _____ 5.30 pm'. He looked at the station clock: ten (18) _____ seven. The café should be open (19) _____ now, he thought. But, knowing station cafes, he realized that he might have to wait (20) _____ eight or even nine o'clock before it opened.

Suddenly, he noticed a pretty girl sitting on a bench. She was pouring tea from a thermos flask into a cup. He sat down and said: I've never seen such a pretty girl as you (21) _____ all my life! And I haven't had a hot drink (22) _____ last night. If you give me a drink of your tea, I'll marry you and look after you (23) _____ the rest of your life!

Believe it or not, she smiled at him, gave him the tea, and ... well, I wouldn't be here now if the café hadn't been shut (24) _____ that faithful day (25) _____ August, 1943.

4. TIME EXPRESSIONS

Replace the underlined words with a time expression using the words in capital letters to the right. You will also need the following prepositions.

At (2) before for (2) from in (6) out of to without

I. You'll have to make your own bed <u>from now on</u> . You'll have to make your own bed <u>in future</u> .	FUTURE
II. Most of her clothes are <u>no longer</u> fashionable.	DATE
III. You really make me angry <u>occasionally</u> .	TIMES
IV. Your Aunt Kate is using the spare bedroom <u>now</u> .	MOMENT
V. <u>Now and then</u> we like to spend a weekend in the mountains.	TIME TO TIME
VI. We'll be in the UK, but <u>only briefly</u> .	LONG
VII. Nobody wanted to buy my car, so <u>finally</u> I had to give it away.	END
VIII. Please complete the rest of your assignments <u>right away</u> .	DELAY
IX. Please be very quiet. There is an examination <u>going on</u> .	PROGRESS
X. I hope to see you next month. <u>Until then</u> , best of your luck with your driving.	MEANTIME
XI. Autumn is the time when fruits like apples and pears are <u>available</u> .	SEASON
XII. Wendy said that she would like to dance, and <u>immediately</u> there were twenty young men offering to dance with her.	NO TIME
XIII. Our daughter left home three years ago, we don't know <u>even now</u> what happened to her.	THIS DAY
XIV. You'll have to sleep in the garden <u>temporarily</u> .	TIME BEING
XV. I hope to see you all again <u>soon</u> .	LONG

5. PAIRS OF PREPOSITIONS

The following pairs of phrases or sentences are very similar. Choose a suitable preposition for each pair.

1) Above/Over	She put a blanket <u>over</u> her knees to keep warm. She was wearing a skirt that came just <u>above</u> the knee.
2) At/In	We arrived _____ Zurich. We arrived _____ Zurich airport.
3) On/On to	The cat loved to sleep _____ the sofa. The cat jumped off the table and _____ the sofa.
4) Below/Under	A lot of Holland is _____ sea level. Atlantis was a city _____ the sea.
5) In/Into	The police burst _____ the room and arrested everyone. The police were already _____ the room when I arrived.
6) At/To	I have to go _____ the doctor's for a check-up. She is _____ the doctor's, having a check-up.
7) Before/In front of	I was _____ you in the queue. Whose is that van _____ the house?
8) In/On	I'm leaving _____ Tuesday morning. See you _____ the morning.
9) At/In	_____ five o'clock exactly. _____ five minutes' time.
10) At/In	Things that go 'bump' _____ the night! The sky _____ night.
11) For/Since	We've been waiting _____ three o'clock. We've been waiting _____ three hours.
12) Among/Between	In this photo I'm standing _____ my two best friends. It's great to be _____ friends.
13) Out of/Outside	The dog jumped _____ the box and into the dustbin.

	The dog was _____ the door, whining to be let in.
14) Above/Over	'Hey diddle/diddle, the cat and the fiddle, the cow jumped _____ the moon.' (Children's nursery rhyme) That cow is definitely _____ average!
15) By/Until	Wait _____ sunset and then leave. Leave _____ sunset at the latest.
16) By/Within	The bill must be paid _____ 30 days. The bill must be paid _____ the end of the month.
17) During/Through	She slept _____ the whole thing! Don't talk _____ the concert.
18) Near/Next to	Come and sit _____ me. Is your house far from town? No it's quite _____ the centre.
19) By/On	'I met my true love down _____ the riverside.' (song) There are lots of people boating _____ the river.
20) Below/Under	If you are _____ eighteen, they won't let you see that film. Once the exchange rate falls _____ a certain level, the bank will take action.

NOTE:

We say *since* a point of time, but *for* a period of time.

To suggests movement; *at* suggests a point you have reached in space or time.

Above/below suggest higher/lower than.

By means not later than a point in time, *within* means not later than a period of time.

6. JOKE TIME 1

Complete the following jokes by filling in the missing prepositions. All the completed phrases are expressions of time and place.

- 1) Teacher: Where are you from?
Student: Germany.
Teacher: Which part?
Student: All of me?
- 2) An old lady went _____ the optician's and said: 'I need a new pair of glasses.'
The opticians replied: 'I knew that as soon as you walked _____ the window.'
- 3) Doctor: Good morning, Mrs Gibbs. I haven't seen you _____ a long time.
Mrs Gibbs: I know, doctor. I've been ill.
- 4) Question: What's the fastest vegetable _____ the world?
Answer: A runner bean.
- 5) Teacher: If we breath oxygen _____ the daytime, what do we breath _____ night?
Student: Nitrogen?
- 6) Patient: Doctor! Doctor! I think I am a dog.
Doctor: Sit down, please.
Patient: I can't. I'm not allowed _____ the furniture.
- 7) Doctor: Did you drink your orange juice after your bath?
Patient: _____ drinking that bath I didn't have much room for the orange juice.
- 8) Man: I had to give up tap dancing.
Woman: Why?
Man: I kept falling _____ the sink.
- 9) Man: What's the best way to remove paint _____ a chair?
Shopkeeper: Sit down _____ it before it's dry.
- 10) Man: My neighbours bang _____ the wall _____ all hours.
Friend: Doesn't that keep you awake?
Man: No, but _____ a while I just can't go on with my trumpet practice!
- 11) James: I throw myself _____ everything I do.
Susan: Go and dig a large hole!

SECTION 2: VERB + PREPOSITIONS

The pattern VERB + PREPOSITION (always followed by an object), e.g. *think about*, *believe in*, is very common in English.

The meaning of the phrase may be literal, e.g. *I looked into the room to see who was there*, or it may be non-literal, e.g. *The police are looking into the disappearance of a nine-year-old boy*. In the second example, *look into* means *investigate*.

Usually the choice of preposition is obvious, but in verb phrases like *look after* (meaning *take care of*), it may not be. Some verbs are followed by a preposition, which you might not expect, e.g. *depend on* (where you might expect *from*).

Note that *to*, in addition to being a marker of the infinitive, e.g. *I like to sunbathe when I'm on holiday*, can also be a simple preposition e.g. *I look forward to seeing you* or *I am not used to getting up early*. The way to check this is to see if you can put *it* after the *to*:

I am not used to getting up early.
I am not used to it.

But:

I like to sunbathe when I'm on holiday.
~~*I like to it*~~ is not possible, so *to* here is not a preposition.

7. MATCHING PAIRS 1

Match each verb + preposition on the left with an object on the right.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1) Enrol on ... | a. ... miracles |
| 2) Believe in ... | b. ... an oncoming vehicle |
| 3) Translate into ... | c. ... an April Fool trick |
| 4) Fall behind with ... | d. ... your knowledge of statistics |
| 5) Brush up on ... | e. ... a course at the English institute |
| 6) Come into ... | f. ... the chance to interview the President |
| 7) Book into ... | g. ... a heavy shower of rain |
| 8) Inoculate against ... | h. ... the best hotel in town |
| 9) Jump at ... | i. ... typhoid, cholera and yellow fever |
| 10) Fall for ... | j. ... your credit card payments |
| 11) Shelter from ... | k. ... a fortune |
| 12) Collide with ... | l. ... several foreign languages |

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
e											

8. VERB GROUPS

Place each of the following verbs under a suitable preposition (five under each). When you have finished, see if you can make sentences using each verb plus preposition.

Abstain	Appeal	Apply	Approve	Believe
Benefit	Cater	Coincide	Collaborate	Compensate
Concentrate	Consist	Cope	Decrease	Dedicate
Delight	Depart	Depend	Dispose	Dream
Enrol	Expel	Flee	Glance	Hint
Indulge	Invest	Long	Marvel	Object
Point	Quarrel	Rely	Respond	Subscribe
Sympathize	Take advantage	Tread	Vote	Wink

AT

FOR

FROM

Glance

IN

OF

ON

TO

WITH

9. SENTENCE TRANSFORMATION 1

Rewrite the following sentences using the verb in capital letters with a suitable preposition to replace the underlined words. Make each new sentence as similar in meaning as possible to the original. You may need to change the tense or the form of the verb. Choose from the following prepositions.

about	across	against	at	by	for	in	into	on
over	round	through	to	towards		with	after	

1. Everyone is full of praise for the new play at the Globe Theatre.

RAVE

Everyone is raving about the new play at the Globe Theatre.

2. Who's taking care of the children?

Who's _____ the children?

LOOK

3. Some people are opposed to women with small children going out to work.

Some people don't _____ women with small children going out to work.

AGREE

4. My dog really likes you.

My dog has really _____ you.

TAKE

5. Would you like to explain in more detail what you proposed when we last spoke?

Would you like to _____ what you proposed when we last spoke?

ELABORATE

6. Rachael did not hesitate to take advantage of the chance to go to Australia.

Rachael _____ the chance to go to Australia.

JUMP

7. Will I be at a disadvantage because of my age?

Will my age _____ me?

COUNT

8. Little children know how to behave in such a way that their parents will give them what they want.




Little children know how to _____ their parents.	
9. The repair we had to do on the car have <u>really used up a lot of</u> our savings.	GET
The repairs have _____ our savings.	EAT
10. <u>Tedious as it was</u> , I had to <u>examine</u> a large number of documents before I found what I was looking for.	
I had to _____ a large number of documents before I found what I was looking for.	PLOUGH
11. She <u>happened to find</u> the missing necklace while she was looking for something else.	
She _____ the missing necklace while she was looking for something else.	STUMBLE
12. Any money I have to spare is <u>added to the money I am saving for</u> my holiday.	
Any money I have to spare is _____ my holiday.	PUT
13. Everybody deserted John after he was arrested, but his wife told him: 'I will <u>not abandon</u> you, John, whatever happens.'	
His wife promised to _____ him.	STICK
14. She decided to <u>treat himself to</u> a large box of chocolates.	
She decided to _____ chocolates.	INDULGE
15. During the interview, the Prime Minister tried to <u>avoid going into detail about</u> an embarrassing story.	
She tried to _____ an embarrassing story.	GLOSS
16. I am happy to <u>confirm that he is a man of</u> integrity.	
I can _____ him.	VOUCH

10. ADVERB + PREPOSITION PAIRS

Complete each of the sentences using one of these adverb + preposition pairs.

around for	around to	away for	away with	back on	behind with
down to	down with	in for	in with	on at	
out for	over to	up on	up to	up with	

1. If you go into the park alone at night, watch out for pickpockets.
2. If you can't do the job, why don't you hand it _____ someone else.
3. I've had so many other things to do lately that I've fallen _____ my studies. Never mind, I'll soon catch up.
4. I've been looking _____ somewhere to live, but I haven't found anything suitable yet.
5. When the sky is red in the morning, it means we are _____ some bad weather.
6. Is Pat ill again? He's forever going _____ some illness or other!
7. Just because I kissed you last night, don't run _____ the idea that I am serious about you.
8. 'When are you going to mend that broken window?'
'Don't worry, I'll get _____ it one of these days.'
9. I didn't bring any money with me. If you play for the meal, I'll settle _____ you later.
10. If you're going to apply for that interpreter's job, you'd better brush _____ your French and German.
11. 'When shall we meet for lunch?'
'Well, I'm free any time, so I'll fit _____ your plans.'
12. He thinks he's superior to everyone else. That's why he always talks _____ people.

- 
13. My sister was very disappointed when she went to see the Backstreet Boys in concert. She said the group failed to live _____ her expectations!
14. My parents nag me constantly. They keep _____ me to smarten myself up and get a proper job.
15. When money is short, you have to think about cutting _____ luxuries.
16. 'Did you get this booklet from a bookshop?'
'No, I had to write _____ it.'

11. VERB + PREPOSITION CROSSWORD

Read through the sentences below and complete the crossword. The missing words are either verbs (in various tenses) or prepositions.

ACROSS

- 2 David's a bit odd, isn't he? He actually _____ rain to sunshine (7).
5 A '_____ away' is a place where you go so that nobody will find you (4).
7 We _____ to France on the ferry (9).
10 Stop _____ at me! I'm not deaf, you know (8).
11 She shared her birthday cake _____ her friends (5).
13 I don't like being in a crowded theatre, so I always try to sit _____ an exit (4).
15 The driver lost control over his car and crashed _____ a lamppost (4).
17 We tried to get everyone to _____ in the dancing (4).
18 Both the candidates were so well qualified that it was very difficult to choose _____ them (7).
20 If you don't agree with the verdict of the court you can always appeal _____ it (7).
21 The next train for Stansted airport will depart _____ platform 6 (4).
24 'What do you get if you _____ 14 by 12?' '168' (8).
26 Yoshiko loves Shakespeare; she's always quoting passages _____ his plays (4).
27 Let me just make a _____ of your e-mail address and I'll send you an e-mail as soon as I get home (4).
28 My job is very international. I work _____ people from all over the world (4).

DOWN

- 1 We went under the bridge to _____ from the rain (7).
3 One of Andrew Lloyd-Webber's most famous songs is 'Don't cry _____ me, Argentina' (3).
4 If it's too small you can always go back to the shop and _____ it for a larger one (8).
6 I have a poor memory so I have to write everything _____ in this little book (4).
8 MusakTV is a really bad channel: everybody complains _____ the rubbish they show (5).
9 Very few prisoners ever managed to _____ from Devil's Island (6).
12 Milk will soon _____ off in hot weather (2).
14 After a long dry spell, everybody _____ for a really heavy shower of rain (5).
15 Has Michael _____ you to his party on Saturday? (7)
16 You remind me _____ my father: he had big ears just like yours! (2)

- 19 You needn't _____ about Liz. She'll be all right. She knows how to look after herself (5).
- 22 Don't try to _____ me for the accident! I wasn't even here when it happened (5).
- 23 He was very shy and didn't like _____ with people, especially strangers (6).
- 25 Would you like one of these cakes? They're _____ over from yesterday's birthday party (4).
- 26 Does the River Thames _____ into the North Sea or the English Channel? (4)
- 29 The judge sentenced him _____ six month's imprisonment (2).

