

Prepositions



in writing

What are prepositions?

Prepositions are words or clauses preceding nouns, noun phrases, or pronouns to show time, direction, place/location, and spatial relationships within a sentence. Sometimes, prepositions also introduce objects. Preposition usage is idiomatic, meaning there are not clear and consistent rules for when certain prepositions are used, and they usually go along with a certain expression. However, we can memorize which prepositions and prepositional phrases are usually used to indicate time, direction, and space.

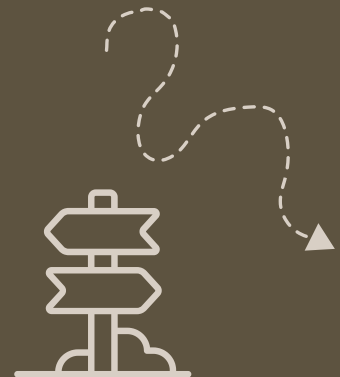
Prepositions of time



- **In** (non-specific time of day, month, year, season)
- **At** (time of day, i.e. morning noon, night)
- **On** (days, i.e. Monday, Friday)
- **For, Since, By, During, To, From, Until, With, Within** (specific extensions of time)

Prepositions of direction

- To
- In
- Into
- On
- Onto



Prepositions of place & location



- **In** (the place itself)
- **At** (the general vicinity)
- **Inside** (something contained)
- **On** (a surface)

Prepositions of spatial relationships



- | | | |
|------------|---------------|-----------|
| • Above | • Below | • Near |
| • Across | • Beneath | • Off |
| • Against | • Beside | • Out of |
| • Ahead of | • Between | • Through |
| • Along | • From | • Toward |
| • Among | • In front of | • Under |
| • Around | • Inside | • Within |
| • Behind | | |

Examples of using prepositions for time, direction, place/location, and spatial relationships:

Time:

Non-specific time

In August, Moe began a graduate program in Biology.

We plan to have lunch at noon.

Direction:

Lana and Hasan carpool to school together.

I place the mail on top of the table.

Place/Location:

I am studying in the library.

Julio and Tom are meeting at the theatre.

Spatial relationships:

The big pot is above the stove.

I stand beside Elena in line for tickets.

Between Park Ave and 1st St, there's a cafe.

Specific time

We must finish the project within three to five days.

During the fall quarter, I took five classes.

The cat jumped onto the kitchen counter.

Two people bump into each other walking.

Inside the venue, there are merch stands.

Marie sits on a park bench and reads.

The freeway entrance is in front of Starbucks.

We set up our picnic under the shady tree.

We can take a walk around the corner.

Book an appointment at the writing center!

We can support you with any writing project. Scan the QR code to book an appointment with us :-)

