

PREPOSITIONS

A preposition is a word that shows the relationship between a noun or a pronoun and another word in the sentence.

Your Writer's Notebook is **underneath** your seat, Andrew.

*(The preposition **underneath** shows the relationship of the seat to the WNB.)*

The one **behind** us screamed in terror.

*(The preposition **behind** shows the relationship of us to one.)*

Prepositions can show place, time, or exception.

- Place:**
- He sat **beside** a cool stream.
 - She stumbled **into** the creepy castle, dark and forbidding.
 - Frodo crawled **away from** the wizard's tower.

- Time:**
- Alynne cried endlessly **during** her imprisonment.
 - She planned her daring escape **until** sunset.

- Exception:**
- Nothing was in the room **except** an enormous, locked chest.
 - She walked **without** a whisper.

Commonly used prepositions:

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

COMPOUND PREPOSITIONS

Some prepositions are made up of more than one word. These are called **compound prepositions**.

according to
aside from
because of
by way of
in addition to

in front of
in place of
in regard to
in spite of
instead of

next to
on account of
out of

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

A preposition always has at least one noun or pronoun as an object. This noun or pronoun is called the **object of the preposition**. The preposition, its object, and any modifiers of the object make up a **prepositional phrase**. Generally, the object of the preposition follows the preposition.

The pile **of dry leaves** hid the magical sword.

(The preposition **of** relates its object, *leaves*, to *pile*. The adjective *dry* modifies *leaves*.)

He poured the potion **over the shield**.

(The preposition *over* relates its object, *shield*, to *potion*.)

A **prepositional phrase** used as an adjective generally should be placed directly after the word it modifies.

Misplaced: The princess got a dress for the queen **with a snowflake design**.

Clear: The princess got a dress **with a snowflake design** for the queen.

Misplaced: The troll wanted to eat the travelers **under the bridge**.

Clear: The troll **under the bridge** wanted to eat the travelers.

Note: Subjects and Verbs are NEVER found in prepositional phrases. If you can spot the prepositional phrase and eliminate it (with parentheses), it will help you narrow your search when looking for the subject and verb of a sentence.

(In the past), knights (from England) travelled (around the kingdom).

Let's practice.

Identify the prepositional phrase(s) in each of the following sentences. Underline the preposition, and circle its object.

1. Yesterday afternoon, we planted a tree behind the house.
2. I bought a pattern for a medieval gown.
3. They live near the castle.
4. For his birthday, my friend wants a battle axe.
5. The painting won't be finished until Friday or Monday.
6. I received a letter from Miss Pryzbylkowski.
7. The largest of all falcons is the arctic falcon.
8. What are the reasons for his quest?
9. I think that you might need a suit of armor for that battle.
10. The Chinese dragon has been celebrated since the earliest times.

Find any misplaced prepositional phrases in each of the following sentences. Then, revise the sentence, placing the phrase near the word it modifies. If a sentence is already correct, write C.

1. Michael went outside to trim the hedges with Bruce.
2. I saw the army marching through my magnifying glass.
3. Dumbledore borrowed a wand from Hagrid with a Phoenix feather.
4. The dragon sat carefully on the eggs in its nest.
5. The frog seemed to be staring at the moon in the pond.