

PREPOSITIONS IN COMMON PHRASES

GENERAL TIPS

Prepositions often clarify relationships of time, space or direction in a sentence, linked with an object:

TIME: in an hour, at noon, on Saturday, since breakfast, after lunch, before bed, by dawn, within the week, for a month, during this year, until next summer, the first of July.

SPACE: at home, in the closet, under the bed, behind the door, across the room, on my laptop, above the cabinet, below the switch, beneath the desk, among the students, beside the exit, between the chairs, by the bathroom, in Montreal, near Vanier.

Also see over, under, underneath, within, around, down, up, into, out of, past, through, toward.

The preposition + object is called a prepositional phrase, and adds information to a sentence that already has a subject and a verb. Prepositions can also be used in a more abstract way, however.

Prepositions are short words that can have multiple and similar meanings depending on how they are used, which often makes them difficult to learn for second-language English students.

Some other uses of prepositions are as follows:

ABOUT on the subject of or concerning
FOR regarding the purpose or function
FROM indicating the source or the reason
OF belonging to, relating to, containing
WITH in the company of, carrying, indicating the condition, indicating the tool used

Sometimes the only way to learn prepositions is to memorize which ones go with which verbs:

STRATEGIES

- 1 Make sure you understand the meaning of each verb.
- 2 Note the preposition that occurs most often with this verb.
- 3 Practice adding a noun after the preposition to complete the expression.
- 4 Make sure you understand the meaning of the expression by coming up with a synonym.

AGAINST discriminate against guard against plot against rebel against struggle against	IN believe in confidence in dressed in engaged in, to hand in interested in involved in join in, to located in, at participate in persist in proficient in result in succeed in	AT aim at arrive at, in fail at, in glance at good at laugh at live at, in, on look at, for, after rejoice at, in smile at stare at surprised at	BY absorbed by, in come by, across denounced by disappointed with, by, in frightened by go by pass by worried by	UPON decide upon, on OVER influence over UP pick up OUT point out try out
INTO divide into enter into translate into				

FROM absent from abstain from adapted from, to away from benefit from, by borrow from buy from collect from conceal from defend from, against deviate from differ from distinguish from emerge from gone from hear from, of hide from keep from prevent from protect from recover from rescue from vary from	FOR apologize for ask about, for blame for call for care for, about condemn for exchange for excuse for hope for known for leave for long for look out for necessary to, for need for pay for pray for prepared for, to qualified for, to remembered for responsible for substitute for thank for wait for watch for wish for work for	OF accused of acquitted of advise of, about afraid of approve of ashamed of aware of beware of capable of certain of, to composed of conscious of consist of convict of convinced of critical of cure of deprive of deserving of despair of die of disapprove of dream of, about envious of fearful of fond of full of glad of, about guilty of ignorant of independent of innocent of jealous of made of oblivious of, to persuade of proud of remind of, about run out of scared of, by speak of, about sure of suspect of take advantage of take care of talk of, about, to terrified by, of tired of tolerant of worthy of	TO acceptable to according to accustomed to addicted to adjacent to admit to apply to aspire to attentive to belong to cease to committed to compare to, with conform to, with consent to contribute to dedicated to devoted to exception to explain to, about exposed to faithful to friendly to generous toward grateful to hostile to, toward identical to indifferent to inferior to kind to limited to listen to look forward to look into married to obedient to object to opposed to painful to polite to prefer to preferable to related to relevant to respond to rude to similar to subscribe to superior to tie to used to	WITH acquainted with agree with, to, on angry with, at annoyed with, by, about argue with, about associate with bored by, with compatible with compete with concur with connected with, to, by, consistent with consult with cope with contend with content with covered with, by crowded with deal with delighted with, by disgusted with displeased with dissatisfied with entrust with equipped with familiar with filled with finished with furnished with gentle with help with interfere with part with patient with play with pleased with popular with provide with put up with reason with satisfied with side with sympathize with unite with upset with, about write with, to
ON based on comment on congratulate on count on depend on, upon impose on inflict on insist on, upon reflect on rely on sit on, at, in spend on	ABOUT anxious about boast about, of careful about, of with complain of, about concerned about depressed about doubt about excited about happy about, with know about think about, of warn about, of worry about			