

Unit 2

Preposition

Objectives

After the completion of this unit, you would be able to–

- use prepositions in sentences and expressions

Overview

Lesson 1: *Prepositions for Time and Place.*

Lesson 2: *Prepositions for Direction, Agent, and Instrument.*

Lesson 3: *Prepositional Phrase*

Answer Key

Lesson 1 : Prepositions for Time and Place



Time

We use:

'At' for the time of day

At five o'clock at 11.45 at midnight at lunchtime at sunset

'On' for days and dates

On Friday/on Fridays on 16 May 1999 on Eid day on my birthday

'In' for longer periods (for example: month/year/seasons)

In October in 1998 in the 18th century in the past
In (the) winter in the 1990s in the middle Ages in (the) future

We use 'at' with these expressions:

At night *I don't like going out at night.*
At the weekend/ at weekends *Will you be here at the weekend?*
At Christmas *Do you give each other presents at Christmas?*
At the moment / at present *Mr. Benn is busy at the moment/at present.*
At the same time *Emily and I arrived at the same time.*

We say:

In the morning (s) **but** on Friday morning (s)
In the afternoon (s) **but** on Sunday afternoon (s)
In the evening (s) **but** one Monday evening (s)
I'll see you in the morning. **but** I'll see you on Friday morning.
Do you work in the evenings? **but** Do you work on Sunday evenings?

We do not use at/on/in before 'last/this/every':

I'll see you next Friday. (not on next Friday)
They got married last March.

In a few minutes / in six months etc.:

The rain will be leaving in a few minutes. (= a few minutes from now)
She'll be here in a moment. (=a moment from now)

On time = punctual, not late. If something happens on time, it happens at the time which was planned:

The 11:45 train left on time. (=it left at 11:45)

“I’ll meet you at 7.30.” “Ok, but please be on time.” (= don’t be late, be there at 7:30)

The conference was well-organized. Everything began and finished on time.

In the time (for something / to do something) = soon enough:

Will you be home in time for dinner? (=soon enough for dinner)

I’ve sent Roy a birthday present. I hope it arrives in time. (=on or before her birthday)

I’m in a hurry. I want to go home in time to see the game on television. (=I got home too late to see the game on television.)

You can say just in time. (=almost too late):

We got to the station just in time for our train.

A child ran into the road in front of the car. I manage to stop just in time.

At the end (of something) = at the time when something ends

For example:

At the end of the month	at the end of January	at the end of the game
At the end the film	at the end of the course	at the end of the concert

I’m going away at the end of January /at the end of the month.

At the end of the concert, there was great applause.

The players shook hands at the end of the game.

In the end = finally

We use in the end when we say what the final result of a situation was.

He got more and more angry. In the end he just walked out the room.

Alan couldn’t decide where to go for his holidays. He didn’t go anywhere in the end.

(not at the end)

The opposite of in the end is usually at first:

At first we didn't get on very well, but in the end we became good friends.

Prepositions of Time

at ...	on ...	in ...
at 10 o'clock	on Monday	in 2013 (years)
at noon	on Friday evening	in the morning
at night	on the 20 th of May / on May 20	in the afternoon
at midnight	on vacation	in the evening
at the end of the day	on time	in two hours
at the weekend (British)	on the weekend (American)	in summer (seasons)
at Easter (Christian holidays)	on Eid-ul-Fitr (Muslim holidays)	in June (months)

Place

In

In a room in a garden in a pool
In a building in a town/country in the sea
In a box in the city center in a river

There's no-one in the room / in the building / in the garden.

What have you got in your hand / in your mouth?

When we were in Italy, we spent a few days in Venice.

I have a friend who lives swimming in the pool / in the sea / in the river.

At

at the bus stop at the door at the window at the roundabout at
reception

Do you know that man standing at the door / at the window?

Turn left at the traffic light / at the church / at roundabout.

We have to get off the bus at the next stop.

When you leave the hotel, please leave your key at reception. (= at the reception)

On

I sat on the floor / on the ground / on the grass / on the beach / on a chair.

There's a dirty mark on the wall / on the ceiling / on your nose / on your shirt.

Have you seen the notice on the notice board / on the door?

You'll find details of TV programmes on page seven of the newspaper.

The hotel is on a small island in the middle of the lake.

• **Compare in and at:**

There were a lot of people *in the shop*. It was very crowded.

Go along this road, then turn left *at the shop*.

I'll meet you *in the hotel* lobby.

I'll meet you *at the entrance to the hotel*.

• **Compare in and on:**

There is some water *in the bottle*.

There is a label *on the bottle*.

• **Compare at and on:**

There is somebody *at the door*. Shall I go and see who it is?

There is a notice *on the door*. It says 'Do not Disturb'.

• **We say that somebody/something is:**

(In)

in a line / in a row / in a queue

in bed

in the sky / in the world

in the country / in the countryside

in an office / in a department

in a photograph / in a picture

in a book / in a (news) paper / in a magazine / in a letter

(On)

On the left / on the right / on the left-hand side / right-hand side

On the ground floor / on the first floor / on the second floor

On a map / on a menu / on a list

On a farm

We say that a place is on a river / on a road / on the coast:

Budapest is on the (river) Danube.

Portsmouth is on the south coast of England.

At Vs On

At

We stopped at a small village on the way to Dhaka.

At the top (of) at the bottom (of)

Write your name at the top of the page.

Jan's house is at the other end of the street.

In the front / at the back of the house.

Let's sit at front (of the cinema).

We were at the back, so we couldn't see very well.

at the end (of)

On

On the front / on the back of a letter / piece of paper etc.

I wrote the date on the back of the photograph

In the corner or on the corner of a street

There is a post box at / on the corner of the street.

In Vs At

In hospital / at home etc.

We say that somebody is---

in hospital / in prison / in jail.

Ann's mother is in hospital.

We say that somebody is---

at home / at work / at school / at university / at college:

I'll be at work until 5:30, but I'll be at home all evening.

Julia is studying chemistry at university.

• Compare at sea and in the sea:

It was a long voyage. We were at sea for 30 days.

I love swimming in the sea.

At

- **We usually say at when we say where an event takes place a (for example: a concert, a film, a party, a meeting):**

We went to a concert at Basundhara Convention Hall.

The meeting took place at the company's head office in Dhaka.

We say at the station. I can get taxi.

- **We stay at somebody's house.**

I was at Sue's house last night.

Or

I was at Sue's last night.

at the doctor's

at the hairdresser's

- **We use 'in' when we are thinking about the building itself.**

Compare:

We had dinner at the hotel. All the rooms in the hotel have air conditioning. (not the hotel)

I was at Salam's (house) last night.

It's always cold in Salam's house. The heating doesn't work very well. (not at Sue's house)

On

We usually say *on bus/ on a train / on a plane / on a ship*

but

in a car / in a taxi

Example:

The bus was very full. There were too many people on it.

Mary arrived in a taxi.

We say---

on a bike (=bicycle) / on a motorbike / on a horse:

Jane passed me on her bike.

- **We say go / come / travel to a place or event**

For example:

go to Chittagong

go to bed

come to my house

go back to Italy

go to the bank

be taken to hospital

return to London

go to concert

be sent to prison

Welcome (somebody) to (a place)

drive to the airport

- **Been to**

We say---

'been to Italy four times, but I've never been to Rome.

Amanda has never been to a football match in her life.

- **Get and arrive**

We say get to (a place):

What did they get to London / to work / to the party?

But we say arrive in ... or arrive at (not arrive to). We say arrive in a town or country:

They arrived at Dhaka / in Bangladesh a week ago.

For other places (building etc) or events, we say arrive at:

When did they arrive at the hotel / at the airport / at the party?

- **Home**

We say: go home / come home / get home / arrive home / on the way home etc. (no preposition).

We do not say 'to home':

I'm tired. Let's go home now. (not go to home)

I met Nisa on my way home. (not my way to home)

- **Into**

Go into, get into ... etc. = enter (a room / a building / a car etc.)

I opened the door, went into the room and star down.

A bird flew into the kitchen through the window.

With some verbs (especially go/get/put) we often use in (instead of into):

She got in the car and drove away. (or She got into the car...)

I read the letter and put it back in envelope.

The opposite of into is 'out of':

She got out of the car and went into a shop.

We usually say 'got on/off a bus / a train / a plane' (not usually get into / out of):

She got on the bus and I never saw her again.



Exercise

Fill the gaps with appropriate prepositions:

1. My last train leaves ___ 10:30.
2. Are you going home ___ Eid?
3. I was born ___ 1999.
4. He's leaving ___ the morning.
5. I'll see you ___ Friday.
6. The interview is ___ 29th April.
7. Turn right ___ the traffic lights.
8. They live ___ 70, Indira road.
9. There was a beautiful painting ___ the wall.
10. Do you like living ___ Dhaka?



Answer Key

1. at
2. at
3. in
4. in
5. on
6. on
7. at
8. at
9. on
10. in

Lesson 2 : Prepositions for Direction, Agent, and Instrument



Expressions with 'in':

In the rain / in the sun (=sunshine) / in the shade / in the dark / in the bad weather etc.

We sat in the shade.

It was too hot to sit in the sun.

Don't go out in the rain. Wait until it stops.

(write) in ink / in biro / in pencil

When you do the exam, you're not allowed to write in pencil.

Also (write) in words / in figures / in BLOCK CAPITALS etc.

Please write your name in block capitals.

Write the story in your own words. (= Don't copy somebody else)

(be/fall) in love (with somebody)

Have you ever been in love with anybody?

In (my) opinion

In my opinion, the film wasn't very good.

At

At the age of ...etc.

We say 'at the age of 16 / at 120 miles an hour / at 100 degrees etc.

We say 'at the age of 16.

Or

... at the age of 16.

The train was traveling at 120 miles an hour.

Water boils at 100 degrees Celsius.

On

On Holiday/ on a tour etc.

We say:

(be/go) on holiday/ business / on a trip / on a tour / on a cruise etc.

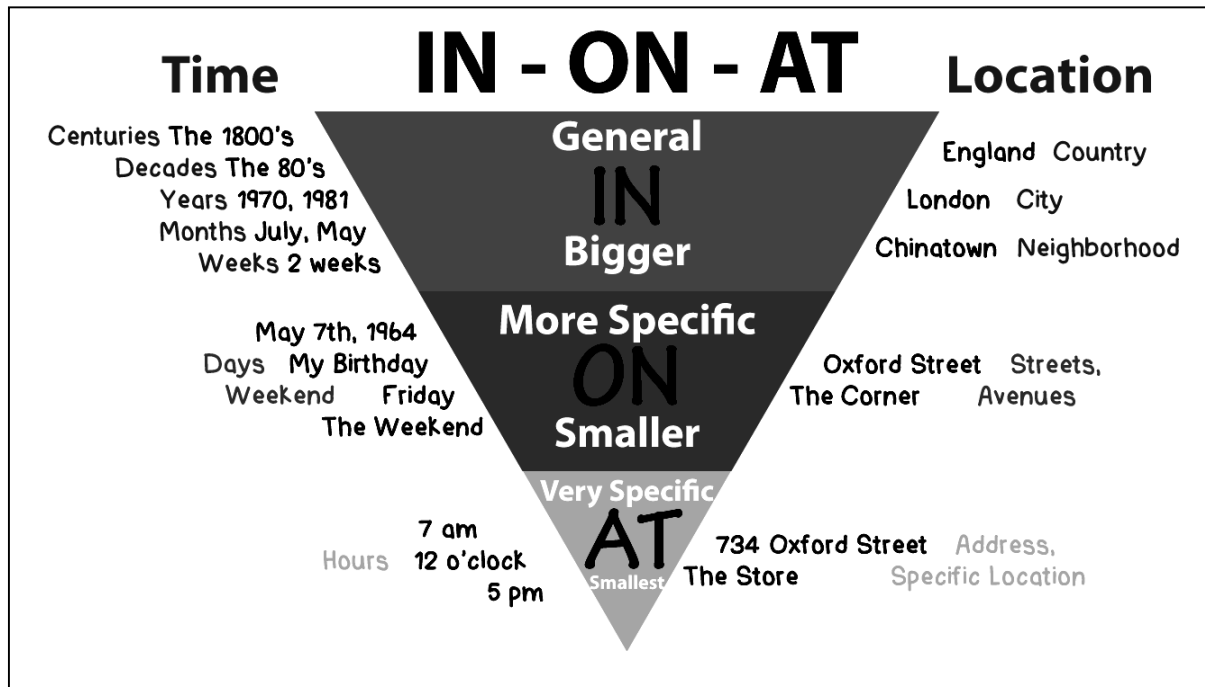
I'm going on holiday next week.

Emma's away on business at the moment

One day I'd like to go on a world tour.

You can also say 'go on a place for a holiday / for my holiday (s)':

Steve has gone to France for a holiday.



Other expressions with 'on'

On television / on the radio:

I didn't watch the news on television, but I heard it on the radio.

On the phone/telephone:

I've never met her, but I've spoken to her on the phone a few times.

(be/go) on strike:

There are no trains today. The drivers are on strike.

(be/go) on a diet:

I've put on a lot of weight. I'll have to go on a diet.

(be) on fire:

Look! that car is on fire.

On the whole (= in general):

Sometimes I have problems at work, but on the whole I enjoy my job.

On purpose (intentionally):

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to annoy you. I didn't do it on purpose.

By

We use 'by' in many excretions to say how we do something. For example, you can:

Send something by post contact somebody by phone / by email / by fax

Do something by hand pay by cheque / by credit card

Can I pay by credit card?

You can contact me by phone, by fax or by email.

But we say

...pay cash or pay in cash (not by cash)

We also say by mistake / by accident / by chance.

We Hadn't arranged to meet. We met by chance.

But we say

...do something on (= you mean to do it):

I didn't do it on purpose. It was an accident.

Note:

We say by chance, by cheque etc. (not by the chance / by a cheque). In these expressions we use by + noun without 'the' or 'a'.

In the same way we use by... to say how somebody travels:

By car / by train / by plane / by boat / by ship / by bus / by bike etc.

By road / by rail / by air / by sea / by underground

Joanne usually goes to work by bus.

O you prefer to travel by air or by train?

But we say on foot:

Did you come here by car or on foot?

You cannot use 'by' if you say my car / the train / a taxi etc. We use by + noun without a/the/my' etc.

We say:

By car but in my car (not by my car)

By train but on the train (not by the train)

For cars and taxis:

They didn't come in their car. They came in a taxi.

We use on for bicycles and public transport (buses, trains etc.):

We travelled on the 6:45 train.

We say the something is done by somebody/something' (passive):

Have you ever been bitten by a dog?

The programme was watched by millions of people.

• **Compare by and with:**

The door must have been opened with a key. (not by a key)

(=somebody used a key to open it)

The door must have been opened by somebody with a key.

We say play by Shakespeare / a painting by Zainul / a novel by Tolstoy etc:

Have you read anything by Ernest Hemingway?

By also means 'beside':

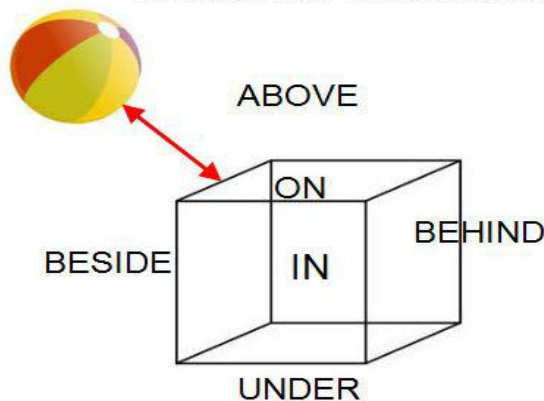
Come and sit by me. (=beside me)

Where's the light switch? "By the door."

Note the following use of by:

Carl and mike had a race over 200 metres. Carl won by about three metres.

Believer's Lesson On The Function Of Prepositions In A Sentence



- The ball is above the box.
- The ball is on the box.
- The ball is in the box.
- The ball is beside the box.
- The ball is under the box.
- The ball is behind the box.



Exercise

Fill the gaps with appropriate prepositions:

1. Imran went ___ the library.

2. Raju jumped ___ the river.

3. He ran away when he felt that someone was coming ___ him.

4. Macbeth is written ___ Shakespeare.
5. The tub is filled ___ water.
6. Shimu opened the lock ___ key.
7. She comes ___ bus daily.
8. You can't play football ___ a ball.
9. He walked ___ the town.
10. The child threw his plate ___ the floor.

 **Answer Key**

1. to
2. into
3. toward
4. by
5. with
6. with
7. by
8. without
9. through
10. onto

Lesson 3 : Prepositional Phrase



Noun + for

A cheque for (a sum of money)

They sent me a cheque for 150.

Demand / a need for

The company closed down because there wasn't enough demand for its product.

There's no excuse for behavior like that. There's no need for it.

A reason for

The train was late, but nobody knew the reason for the delay. (not reason of)

Noun + of

An advantage / a disadvantage of

The advantage of living alone is that you can do what you like.

But there is an advantage in (or to) doing something

There are many advantages in living alone. (or... to living alone)

A case of

The cause of the explosion is unknown.

A photograph / a picture / a map / a plan / a drawing (etc.) of ...

Rachel showed me some photographs of her family.

I had a map of the town, so I was able to find my way around.

Noun + in an increase / a decrease / a rise / a fall in (prices etc.)

There has been an increase in the number of road accidents recently.

Last year was a bad one for the company. There was a big fall in sales.

Noun + to

Damage to:

The accident was my fault, so I had to pay for the damage to the other car.

An invitation to ... (a party / a wedding etc.)

A solution to (a problem) / a key to (a door) / an answer to (a question) a reply to a letter) / a reaction to....

I hope we'll find a solution to the problem. (not a solution of the problem)

I was surprised at her reaction to my suggestion.

An attitude to (or towards...)

His attitude to his job is very negative. Or His attitude towards his job...

Noun + with .../ between...

A relationship / a connection / contact with....

Do you have a good relationship with your parents?

The police want to question a man in connection with the robbery.

But relationship / a connection / contact / a difference between two things or people

The Police believe that there is no connection between the two crimes.

There are some differences between British and American English.

It was nice of you to

Nice / kind / good / generous / polite / stupid / silly etc. of somebody (to do something)

Thank you. It was very kind of you to help me.

It is stupid of me to go out without a coat in such cold weather.

But (be) nice / kind / good / generous / polite / rude / friendly / cruel etc. to somebody

The have always been very nice to me. (not with me)

Why were you so unfriendly to Ahmad?

Adjective + about / with

Angry / annoyed / furious about something

With somebody for doing something

It's stupid to get angry about things that don't matter.

Are you annoyed with me for being late?

Excited / worried / upset / nervous / happy etc. about a situation

Are you excited about going away next week?

Nisa is upset about not being invited to the party.

Delighted / pleased / satisfied / happy / disappointed with something you receive, or the result of something.

I was delighted with the present you gave me.

Were you happy with your exam results?

Adjective + at / by / with

Surprised / shocked / amazed / astonished at / by something

Everybody was surprised at (or at) the news.

I hope you weren't shocked by (or by) what I said.

Impressed with/ by somebody / somebody

I'm very impressed with (or by) her English. It's very good.

Fed up / bored with something

I don't enjoy my job any more. I'm fed up with it. / I'm bored with it.

Sorry about / for

Sorry about a situation or something that happened

I'm sorry about the mess. I'll clear it up latter.

We're all sorry about Julie losing her job.

Sorry for / about something you did

Alex is very sorry for what he said. (or sorry about what he said)

I'm sorry for shouting at you yesterday. (or sorry about shouting)

You can also say I'm sorry I (did something):

I'm sorry I shouted at you yesterday.

Feel / be sorry for somebody who is in a bad situation

I feel sorry for matt. He's had a lot of bad luck. (not I feel sorry about Maqbul)

Afraid / frightened / terrified / scared of

Are you afraid of spiders? Yes, I'm terrified of them.

Fond / proud / ashamed / tolerate of

Why didn't trust me. He was suspicious of my intentions.

Adjective + of

Aware / conscious of

Did you know he was married? No I wasn't aware of that.

Capable / incapable of

I'm sure you are capable of passing the examination.

Full / short of

The letter I wrote was full of mistakes. (not full with)

I'm a bit short of money. Can you lend me some?

Typical of

He's late again. It's typical of him to keep everybody waiting.

Tired / sick of

Come on, let's go! I'm tired of waiting. (=I've had enough of waiting.)

Certain / sure of or about....

I think she's arriving this evening, but I'm not sure of that or ... sure about that

Adjective + at / to form / in / on with for

Good / bad / brilliant / better / hopeless etc. at

I'm not very good at repairing things. (not good in repairing things)

Married / engaged to

Linda is married to an American. (not married with)

But Linda is married with three children. (=she is married and has three children)

Similar to

Your writing is similar to mine.

different from or different to

The film was different from what I'd expected. (or different to what I'd expected.)

interested in

Are you interested in art?

keen on

We stayed at home because Chris wasn't very keen on going out.

dependent on ... (but independent of ...)

I don't want to be dependent on anybody.

HSC Programme

crowded with (people etc.)

The streets were crowded with tourists. (but full of tourists)

famous for....

The Italian city of Florence is famous for its art treasures.

responsible for

Who was responsible for all that noise last night?

verb + to

talk / speak to somebody (with is also possible but less usual)

listen to

We spent the evening listening to music. (not listening music)

write (letter) To

I wrote to the hotel complaining about the poor service we had received.

apologies to somebody (for...)

They apologised to me for what happened. (not They apologised me)

explain something to somebody

Can you explain this word to me? (not explain me this word)

explain / describe (to somebody) what/how/why...

I explained to them why I was worried. (not I explained them)

Let them describe to you what I saw. (not Let me describe you)

We do not use to with these verbs:

phone/ telephone / call somebody

Did you phone your father yesterday? (not phone to your father)

answer somebody/something

He refused to answer my question. (not answer to my question)

ask somebody

Can I ask you a question? (not ask to you)

thank somebody (for something)

He thanked me for helping him. (not he thanked to me)

verb + at

look / stare / glance at have a look / take a look at

Why are you looking at me like that?

laugh at

I look stupid with this haircut. Everybody will laugh at me.

aim / point (something) at ..., at shoot / fire (a gun) at

Don't point that knife at me. It's dangerous.

We saw someone with a gun shooting at birds, but he didn't hit any.

Some verbs can be followed by at or to, with a difference of meaning.

For example:

Shout at somebody (when you are angry)

He got very angry and started shouting at me.

Shout to somebody (so that they can hear you)

He shouted to me from the other side of the street.

Throw something at somebody/something (in order to hit them)

Somebody threw an egg at the singer.

Throw something to somebody (for somebody to catch)

Nisa shouted ' Catch!' and threw the keys to me from the window.

Verb + about

talk / read / know about ..., tell somebody about

We talked about a lot of things at the meeting

have a discussion about something, but discuss something (no preposition)

We had a discussion about what we should do.

We discussed a lot of things at the meeting. (not discussed about)

do something about something = do something to improve a bad situation

If you are worried about the problem, you should do something about it.

Care about, care for and take care of

care about somebody/something = think that somebody / something is important

He's very selfish. He doesn't care about other people.

We say---

care what/where/how... etc. (without about)

You can do what you like. I don't care what you do.

Care for somebody/something

like something (usually in questions and negative sentences)

Would you care for a cup of coffee? (=Would you like...?)

I don't care for very hot weather. (=I don't like...)



Exercise

Fill the gaps with appropriate prepositions:

1. She is listening ___ music.
2. Rina looked ___ the blackboard.
3. We believe ___ God.
4. They were waiting ___ the teacher.
5. Do you agree ___ me?
6. Do you agree ___ my proposal?
7. Someone is knocking ___ the door.
8. You should not rely ___ her.
9. The balloon drifted ___ the stairs.
10. According ___ the weather forecast, it will rain today.



Answer Key

1. to
2. at
3. in
4. for
5. with
6. to
7. at
8. on
9. up
10. to