

PREPOSITION USES

Prepositions are frequently used in English to relate a noun or pronoun to some other word in the sentence. They express a number of relationships, including time, location, manner, means, quantity, purpose, and state or condition. You will find examples of preposition usage in your reading. Study them in the context in which they appear.

To Show Time

When does it happen?

about	about noon (approximately)
after	after the game after lunch after three
at	at five o'clock at last (finally)
by	by midnight (not later than)
for	for an hour (duration)
from	from Monday to Friday
in	in the morning (evening) in the fall (spring) in April (month) in 1969 (year) in six months (at the end of) in time (early enough)
of	quarter of three
on	on Tuesday (weekday)
on	on May 8 (date) on time (punctual)
past	quarter past three
to	quarter to three

To Show Manner

How did it happen? How was it done?

by	By doing it yourself, you save time
in	He left in confusion. The room was in a turmoil. You can do it in a day.
like	He looks like a hero.
on	I swear it on my word of honor
with	He ate it with a fork. He went with me.

To Show Place or Direction

Where is it? Where is it going?

around	She walked around the car.
at	They are at home. We were at the restaurant. He smiled at her.
down	They lived down the hall.
from	We drove from Utah to Iowa. a mile from here
in	He lives in a trailer. We waited in the bus He is in Paris.
of	inside of the house south of Montreal
on	on the ocean pier on the train (bus, plane) on the table
through	We drove through the tunnel
to	He went to Prague. Give it to me.
up	He walked up the stairs.

To Show Means or Agent

Who or what did it?

What was it done with?

by	He was hit by a ball. She came by train. He did it by hard work. It came by special delivery. He got there by swimming.
from	His success came from planning. He takes pleasure in it.
on	They live on fruit.
with	He cut the bread with a knife..

To Show Purpose

Why was this done?

for He bought it for them.
She went to the city for sightseeing.
He loved her for her thoughtfulness.
I asked you for it.
We looked for it.

To Show State or Condition

How or where is it?

at My friend is at work.
She is at home.
by They are by themselves. (alone)
in He is in a state of confusion.
on He is on duty. (subject to duty)

To Show Quantity or Measure

How much? How long?

for We drove for twenty miles.
We bought it for ten cents.
by We bought them by the kilo.

Uses of Prepositions after Certain Verbs

account for (meaning *explain*)
agree on (something)
agree with (someone)
apologize to
apply for
approve of
argue with (someone)
ask for
believe in
belong to
blame (someone) for (something)
blame (something) on (someone)
borrow from
call on (upon)
care for
compliment (someone) on
come from
consent to
consist of
convince (someone) of (something)
decide upon
depend on, upon
get rid of
hear about
hear from

hear of
insist on, upon
invite (someone) to
laugh at
listen for
listen to
look at
look for
look forward to
object to
plan on
provide for
provide with
recover from
remind (someone) of
search for
see about
substitute for
talk about
talk of
telephone to
think about
think of
wait for (meaning *anticipate*)
wait on (meaning *serve*)

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