

Prepositions : Overview

FORM:

A preposition may be composed of one, two, or three parts.

A. one part - *of, on, at, by, from*

B. two parts - *because of, according to, apart from, as for*

C. three parts - *by means of, with reference to, on account of, in regard to*

PREPOSITIONS

USE:

A “**preposition**” connects a noun structure to some other word in the sentence. The nominal structure may be:

1. a noun - *The jeweller showed the diamond ring to his wife.*

2. a pronoun - *The jeweller showed the diamond ring to her.*

3. a gerund phrase - *The jeweller did not object to showing the diamond ring to her.*

4. a noun clause - *The jeweller showed the diamond ring to whoever might be a potential buyer.*

Special functions of prepositional forms:

1. part of verb (verb-preposition combinations):

e.g. keep on (= continue), get up (= awake), go over (= review)

2. adverb (mostly place and direction):

e.g. *He went down.* (*Down* is an adverb.)

He went down the stairs. (*Down* is a preposition)

Some prepositional forms are also used as conjunctions (mostly time):

e.g. *I will see you after dinner is served.* (*After* is a conjunction).

I will see you after dinner. (*After* is a preposition.)

A “**preposition**” usually appears before its noun object. In informal grammar, a “**preposition**” may appear in final position in:

1. a question - e.g. *Which house does he live in?*

2. an adjective clause - e.g. *There is the house (which) he lives in.*

3. a noun clause - e.g. *I don't know which house he lives in.*

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

1. adverbial - *sit under a tree, leave at nine o'clock*
2. adjectival - *the subway under the street, the meeting at nine o'clock*
3. nominal (as a “prepositional object” of a verb) - dispose of the goods, wait for John
An adjectival prepositional phrase appears after the noun it modifies (the student *in the back row*).

A nominal phrase appears after a verb (*listen to your parents*). An adverbial phrase has three possible positions.

1. initial - *In spite of her handicap, the blind girl did well in school.*
2. mid - *The blind girl, in spite of her handicap, did well in school.*
3. final - *The blind girl did well in school in spite of her handicap.*

It is possible to have a sequence of prepositional phrases:

1. adverbial - *The members met in Paris on July 16.*
2. adjectival - *The meeting of the members is in Paris on July 16.*

PREPOSITIONS OF TIME

1. one point in time - *on* (with days - may be omitted informally, dates);
- *at* (with noon, night, midnight; with the time of day);
- *in* (with other parts of the day, with months, with years, with seasons).
2. extended time - *since, for* (sometimes omitted informally), *by, from-to, from-until, during, (with)in*.

Supply the required PREPOSITION OF TIME.

1. They are getting married _____ Friday _____ six o'clock _____ the evening.
2. Exactly _____ midnight we were awakened by the shrill sound of the fire alarm.
3. The reception will be _____ Sunday _____ four _____ the afternoon.
4. Spring begins _____ March 21, summer _____ June 21, autumn _____ September 22, and winter _____ December 22.
5. The last time I saw him was _____ the spring of 1976.

Intermediate 3 – Exercise 12 – Prepositions: Overview

6. The event took place _____ August.
7. He came to this country _____ July 5, 1968.
8. He came to this country _____ 1968.
9. Daffodils usually bloom _____ late March.
10. World War II lasted _____ 1939 _____ 1945.
11. They say that _____ the spring a young man's fancy fondly turns to thoughts of love.
12. He has not felt well _____ a long time, ever _____ his accident.
13. He has been away from home _____ two weeks.
14. They never go out _____ night _____ the week.
15. _____ the storm, all the lights were out _____ several hours.
16. We'll be ready to leave _____ an hour from now.
17. Recently, he has been locking the doors _____ midnight before he goes to bed.
18. The temperature is below zero. _____ a few hours the pond should be frozen over.

PREPOSITIONS OF PLACE

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|---------------------------|---|
| 1. the point itself | - <i>in, inside</i> (for something contained);
- <i>on</i> (the surface);
- <i>at</i> (a general vicinity). |
| 2. higher than a point | - <i>over</i> (generally), <i>above</i> (directly). |
| 3. lower than a point | - <i>under</i> (generally), <i>underneath</i> (close under),
<i>beneath</i> ,
<i>below</i> (directly) |
| 4. neighbouring the point | - <i>near, by, next to, between, among, opposite</i> |

Supply the required PREPOSITION OF PLACE.

1. I'll meet you _____ the Statler Hotel.
2. If you want to reach that shelf, you'd better stand _____ a chair.
3. You will find some stamps _____ the middle drawer of the desk.
4. We are still living _____ Bedford Avenue. We used to live _____ 450 Bedford Avenue, but we now live _____ 631 Bedford Avenue.

Intermediate 3 – Exercise 12 – Prepositions: Overview

5. This apartment is 10D. 11D, upstairs, is the apartment directly _____ us.
6. _____ the box were the earrings she thought she had lost.
7. Some of the most expensive stores _____ New York are _____ Fifth Avenue.
8. _____ the front page of a newspaper are the most important stories of the day.
9. Please, play _____ the house. It's too cold outside.
10. When you are sitting _____ the table for dinner, don't put your elbows _____ the table.
11. There is no one _____ the world who can help me now.
12. The boy hid the money _____ a rock _____ the garden.
13. A subterranean river runs _____ the ground.
14. The tax office is _____ the second floor.
15. A submarine operates _____ the surface of the water.
16. We'll wait for you _____ the lobby of the hotel.

***Arrive in** is used for a larger geographical area such as a country. **Arrive at** is used for a smaller area such as a building, a station, an airport. With cities or towns, **arrive in** is far more common than **arrive at**.