Prepositions

A **preposition** links nouns, pronouns, and phrases to other words in the sentence. A noun or noun phrase following the preposition is known as the **object of the preposition**. Prepositions can show temporal, spatial, or logical connections in a sentence.

**Temporal Prepositions**

- **At** can define specific times.
  - Ex: Lunch is at noon.
  - Ex: The flight departs at 5:15 p.m.

- **On** can describe specific days and dates.
  - Ex: Christmas is on December 25.
  - Ex: The new semester begins on Tuesday.

- **In** can define a nonspecific time of a day, month, season, or year.
  - Ex: John went home in the afternoon.
  - Ex: Thanksgiving is an American holiday celebrated in November.

- **In** can also define an allotted length of time.
  - Ex: The paper is due in two weeks.
  - Ex: The carpenter can finish the job in one hour.

- **Since** can reference a specific date or occurrence.
  - Ex: Fred has been dead since March 12, 1864.
  - Ex: Margaret has been marooned since her ship sank.

- **For** can be used to measure specific time.
  - Ex: Jane can hold her breath for two minutes.
  - Ex: The garbage can has been full for three days.

**Spatial Prepositions**

- **At** can denote a specific address or place.
  - Ex: DBU is located at 3000 Mountain Creek Parkway.
  - Ex: Area rugs can be found at Home Depot.

- **On** can designate names of streets.
  - Ex: Bob lives on Burger Street.
  - Ex: Harry saw Hermione driving on Davis Street this morning.

- **On** can also refer to spatial placement.
  - Ex: Mom left her keys on the counter.
  - Ex: Todd put his shoes on his feet.

- **In** can be used to refer to specific areas.
  - Ex: Santa Claus is rumored to vacation in Sweden.
  - Ex: There are a dozen fresh cookies in the cookie jar.
One way to think of many spatial prepositions is to imagine a bird with reference to a house. A bird may be on, above, near, inside, outside, or under a house.

**Logical Prepositions**

Prepositions like *concerning, regarding, and about* show connections between ideas in a sentence.

Ex: Tom learned many interesting facts about rabies when Darth Vader’s feral cat attacked him.
Ex: Regarding the recent increase in the elephant population, the Galactic Empire declared “Free Elephant Tuesdays” among the storm troopers.

One way to think of many logical prepositions, which can be tricky, is to imagine the qualities of a book. A book is typically written by someone, about something, with characters, during a certain time period.

**List of Common Prepositions**

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**Note:** some location words (like home, downtown, uptown, inside, outside, downstairs, and upstairs) do not always require a preposition.

Ex: Hannah went inside the igloo.
Ex: James likes to spend time at home, so he went home after the party.