



Prepositions and Prepositional Phrases

Definition:

A **preposition** establishes a relationship between words in a sentence.

Prepositions dealing with time, space, position, and direction:

Often, prepositions are used to situate objects, persons, or events in time and space. For example:

- a) His book is ***in*** the bedroom.
The use of the preposition “***in***” establishes a connection between the book and the bedroom, specifically telling the reader where the book is located.
- b) The meeting is ***at*** six o’clock.
The use of the preposition “***at***” establishes a connection between the meeting and six o’clock, specifically telling the reader what time the meeting will be held.

Common Prepositions dealing with ***time, space, position, and direction***:

about	above	across	after	against	along
along with	among	around	at	before	behind
below	beneath	beside	besides	between	beyond
by	down	during	for	from	in
inside	inside of	into	near	next to	off
on	onto	on top of	out	out of	outside
over	past	since	through	throughout	till
to	toward	towards	under	underneath	until
up	upon	within			

Definition:

Prepositional phrases are expressions that modify the sentence in which they occur. They perform the role of an adjective or an adverb, providing context for the object, person, or event being described. For example:

- a) Mary sat by the window.
- b) The car is behind the house.

Prepositions dealing with comparisons, exclusions, additions, etc...

Another way prepositions may be used to establish relationships between words is to provide comparisons, exclusions and additions. All of these words can be used as **transitional words**: they let the reader know that you are changing ideas or are changing views about an idea. For example:

- a) Most people know smoking is bad for you. In spite of this knowledge, many people continue to smoke.
- b) All students may go on the field trip, except for those who failed to get their permission slips signed.

Common Prepositions dealing with **comparisons, exclusions, additions**:

according to concerning excepting of with	As despite in addition to on account of without	as for due to in spite of regardless of	aside from except instead of regarding	because of except for like unlike
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Prepositions are idiomatic:

Prepositions are difficult to understand because they do not have precise definitions. Instead, they draw much of their meaning from the noun phrase that they are attached to. If you are ever in doubt as to the correct use of a preposition, consult a dictionary or other reference source for proper usage.

Prepositions and commas:

If a prepositional phrase occurs at the beginning of a sentence, a comma should be placed immediately following it. For example:

- a) According to most dentists, you should brush your teeth after every meal.
- b) Due to our late arrival, we will be unable to meet you for dinner.