

## 24 PREPOSITIONS

A preposition is a word used before a noun to show its relation to some other word in the sentence.

### Types/Uses

Prepositions of Place or Position

- To indicate the position of a subject

Prepositions of Direction

- To indicate where something is going or moving to

### Examples

- The cat is sleeping **under** the table.
- The post office is **behind** the school.
- She was leaning **against** the tree when the boy cycled by.
- She sits **beside** Praveena in class.
- The dog ran **across** the road.
- She walked **towards** the boy and carried him in her arms.
- The cat fell **off** the table.
- Bryan turned **around** when the teacher called his name.
- He quickly put the books **into** the bag and ran **off**.

## Types/Uses

Prepositions of Time  
• To indicate when something happens

Prepositions of Purpose  
• To indicate the purpose of an action

## Examples

- They left **after** the game.
- The boys arrived **before** you did.
- A fight broke out **during** the match.
- Sheila has been living in Ipoh **since** 1971.
- She managed to finish the run **within** the time allocated.
- Siti slogged over the stove **for** two hours.

  

- The man was taken to the police station **for** questioning.
- The boy begged the teacher **for** an extra mark so that he could pass his exam.

## Common Errors

### in, into

- *In* shows a position or place.
- *Into* shows a movement from one position to another.

- The boy is **in** the room.

- He went **into** the room to take his bag.

### between, among

- *Between* is used for only two things.
- *Among* is used to compare more than two.

- I sit **between** Yvonne and Cheng Wun in class.

- Siti is the tallest **among** the three sisters.

### by, with

- *By* is usually used with people or a means of transport.
- *With* is used for instruments.

- He was questioned **by** the police.

- Shanmugan goes to school **by** bus.

- He sliced the potato **with** a knife.

### beside, besides

- *Beside* means next to.
- *Besides* means *in addition to*.

- I sit **beside** Gowry in class.

- **Besides** listening to English songs, we can read more English books to improve our language.

### at, in

- *In* usually refers to a larger space of time, or place.
- *At* is more precise.

- Mr Soo went home **at** 6 o'clock **in** the evening.

- His house is **at** Lorong Tupai **in** Taman Selesa.

**Exercise 1**

Complete the following with suitable one-word prepositions.

1 Pancho Villa was born \_\_\_\_\_ 1877 and died  
\_\_\_\_\_ 1923. He was a Mexican bandit who joined forces  
\_\_\_\_\_ other Mexicans \_\_\_\_\_ fight the  
dictatorship \_\_\_\_\_ Porfirio Diaz. He remained  
\_\_\_\_\_ the army even \_\_\_\_\_ the revolution. After

1914, Villa governed the state \_\_\_\_\_ Chihuahua, but continued his rebellion \_\_\_\_\_ the new governor of Mexico. He was assassinated \_\_\_\_\_ his ranch \_\_\_\_\_ 1923.

2 The audience cheered as the artist walked \_\_\_\_\_ the stage. She removed the microphone \_\_\_\_\_ its stand and walked \_\_\_\_\_ the centre \_\_\_\_\_ the stage. The moment she started \_\_\_\_\_ sing, the crowd cheered again. They clapped and cheered \_\_\_\_\_ the rhythm.

3 Hundreds of children were seated \_\_\_\_\_ the floor painting their favourite cartoon character. Most \_\_\_\_\_ them were so deep \_\_\_\_\_ concentration that they did not bother \_\_\_\_\_ collect their drink coupons. They were trying \_\_\_\_\_ complete their drawing \_\_\_\_\_ the time allotted \_\_\_\_\_ them.

**Exercise 2**

Complete the following dialogues with suitable prepositions.

1 Anita : When do we have to hand \_\_\_\_\_ our project?  
Samsiah : It is due next week.

2 Julia : How does this tape recorder work?  
Moi Sin : Push this button to turn it \_\_\_\_\_ and push that button to shut it \_\_\_\_\_.

3 Kee Seng : May I borrow your dictionary?  
Mohd. : Sure. But please be sure to put it \_\_\_\_\_ the shelf after you've finished.

4 Mani : I need to talk to Kamariah.  
Susi : Why don't you call her \_\_\_\_\_? She's probably at home.

5 Ella : Are you here to apply for a job?  
Siti : Yes.  
Ella : Here is an application form. Fill it \_\_\_\_\_ and then give it \_\_\_\_\_ me when you have finished.

6 Mum : Don't forget to turn the lights \_\_\_\_\_ before you go to bed.  
Son : All right.

7 Samy : How was your holiday \_\_\_\_\_ Pulau Tioman?  
Muthu : I had a great time.  
Samy : When did you get back \_\_\_\_\_ Pulau Tioman?  
Muthu : A few days ago. I had planned \_\_\_\_\_ stay a little longer, but I ran \_\_\_\_\_ of money.

8 Teacher : Omar, would you please pass these papers \_\_\_\_\_ the rest of the class?  
Omar : I'd be happy \_\_\_\_\_, teacher.

9 Din : How do you spell 'occasionally'?  
Mat : I'm not sure. You'd better look it \_\_\_\_\_ in your dictionary.

10 Gopal : How do you get \_\_\_\_\_ with your roommate?  
Siva : Fine. He's a nice guy.

**Exercise 3**

Complete the following proverbs with suitable prepositions.

- 1 Birds \_\_\_\_\_ a feather flock together.
- 2 People who live \_\_\_\_\_ glass houses shouldn't throw stones.
- 3 A man may lead a horse \_\_\_\_\_ water, but he cannot make it drink.
- 4 Charity begins \_\_\_\_\_ home.
- 5 Don't cry \_\_\_\_\_ spilt milk.
- 6 Don't judge a book \_\_\_\_\_ its cover.
- 7 Don't put all your eggs \_\_\_\_\_ one basket.
- 8 A jack of all trades is a master \_\_\_\_\_ none.
- 9 Look \_\_\_\_\_ you leap.
- 10 A stitch \_\_\_\_\_ time saves nine.
- 11 There is no smoke \_\_\_\_\_ fire.
- 12 Time and tide wait \_\_\_\_\_ no man.