

# 38 Prepositions in time phrases

I'm afraid I can't stop and talk – I'm **in a hurry**.

I'm going to Jo's wedding and I have to get to the church **on time**. If I get the 3.30 train, I'll be there **in time** to walk to the church.

It'll be great: I haven't seen my cousins **for ages**.

I enjoy weddings, but **at times** I get emotional and cry.

Jo told me last year she was getting married. **At the time** I was very surprised!

It was difficult finding anywhere to live, but **at last** they've bought a flat.

They can't move in yet. **In the meantime**, they'll live with Jo's parents.

## SPOTLIGHT *at last*

**At last** means 'in the end' or 'finally', but is often used after there has been a long wait and/or a number of problems.

► *We spent all day looking for a pharmacy, then at last we found one.*

(NOT *We went to the cinema, had a meal, then at last went home.*)

The ceremony is quite short, so we won't be in the church **for long**.

**By the time** the wedding ceremony is over though, I'll be hungry.

We're all going to the reception afterwards, and we'll be there **for a while**.

## GLOSSARY

<b>in a hurry</b>	needing or wanting to do sth very quickly
<b>on time</b>	not late or early; at exactly the correct time
<b>in time (for sth/ to do sth)</b>	not late
<b>for long</b>	(used in questions and negative sentences) for a long time
<b>by the time</b>	used for saying what has already happened when sth else happens
<b>for a while</b>	a period of time (not usually a long time)
<b>for ages</b>	for a very long time
<b>at times</b>	sometimes: <i>My job is difficult at times.</i>
<b>at the time</b>	(referring to a past time) then
<b>in the meantime</b>	in the time between two things happening <b>meanwhile</b>

### 1 Make seven more time phrases using words the box.

by ✓      in      in the      at      at      ages      time      meantime      the time ✓  
for      for a      at      in a      while      times      last      hurry

► **by the time** \_\_\_\_\_

### 2 Complete the sentences.

► The students are usually here on **time** \_\_\_\_\_.

- I ran back to the shop, but **by the** \_\_\_\_\_ I got there, it was closed.
- Seb's not here, but he won't be out **for** \_\_\_\_\_ because it's nearly dinner time!
- Li went to the beach, so he'll be gone **for a** \_\_\_\_\_. In the \_\_\_\_\_, let's chat.
- I was standing in the rain for half an hour and then **at** \_\_\_\_\_ they got here.
- Martin was in a \_\_\_\_\_, so he couldn't stop for lunch.
- Do you know, I haven't seen my next-door neighbour **for** \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3 Complete the sentences with a suitable time phrase.

► It's usually warm here, but **at times** \_\_\_\_\_ it can get cold in the evenings.

- It doesn't matter if you're early. Just make sure you're there \_\_\_\_\_ for the meal.
- When Max says 8 p.m., he means 8 p.m., so be there \_\_\_\_\_.
- We haven't been outside Europe \_\_\_\_\_: it must be about five years.
- When I got there, Sylvia was studying, so I didn't stay \_\_\_\_\_.
- I don't remember much about the cottage. \_\_\_\_\_ I was just a small child.
- We spent months looking for somewhere to live, then \_\_\_\_\_ we found just the right place – close to the centre but in a quiet road.
- When I first lived in Edinburgh, I stayed with my aunt \_\_\_\_\_ – just a couple of weeks.
- I'd like to play tennis, but \_\_\_\_\_ I finish this work, it'll be too late.
- My parents said they would be back in a couple of hours, so \_\_\_\_\_ we could watch a video.



## TEST YOURSELF