



Prepositions and Prepositional Phrases

Overview

An important element of English sentences is the prepositional phrase. It consists of a preposition (**prep**) and its object (**o**). The object of a preposition is a noun or pronoun.

(**s**) = subject of sentence; (**v**) = verb; (**prep**) = preposition; (**o**) = object

Example: The student (**s**) studies (**v**) in (prep) the library (o of prep)

→ in the library is a prepositional phrase.

Example: We (**s**) enjoyed (**v**) the party (**o**) at (prep) your house (o of prep)

→ at your house is a prepositional phrase.

Example: We went to the zoo (place) in the afternoon (time).

In most English sentences, “**place**” comes before “**time**.”

Example: In the afternoon, we went swimming.

Sometimes a prepositional phrase comes at the beginning of a sentence

Common Prepositions

About	Before	During	Out	Until
Above	Beyond	From	Over	Up
Across	Beneath	For	Since	Upon
Along	Behind	In	Through	With
After	Beside	Into	Througho	Within
Against	Besides	Like	ut	Without
Among	Between	Near	Till	
At	By	Of	To	
Around	Despite	Off	Toward(s)	
Below	Down	On	Under	

Prepositions with Adjectives and Verbs

Be absent from	Believe in	Be capable of	Be convinced of
Be accused of	Blame for	Care about/for	Be covered with
Be acquainted with	Be blessed with	Be committed to	Be dedicated to
Be accused of	Be bored with/by	Be connected to	Be devoted to

Be divorced from	Hope for	Opposed to	Succeed in
Be envious of	Be innocent of	Be prepared for	Take advantage of
Be excited about	Be interested in	Be proud of	Take care of
Be familiar with	Be involved in	Be qualified for	Talk about
Be filled with	Be jealous of	Be remembered by	Be terrified of/by
Be friendly to/with	Be known for	Be responsible for	Be tired of/by
Be frightened of	Be located in	Be satisfied with	Be upset with
Be gone from	Be made of/from	Be scared of	Be used to
Be grateful to/for	Be married to	Stare at	Vote for
Hide from	Object to	Substitute for	Be worried about

Practice Exercises

Exercise 1

Identifying Prepositions. Underline the prepositional phrases in the following sentences. Identify the preposition (**prep**) and the noun that is used as the object of the preposition (**o of prep**).

- Grasshoppers destroyed the wheat in the field.
- The waiter cleared the dirty dishes from our table.
- I parked my car in the garage.
- Trees fell during the violent storm.
- Cowboys depended on horses for transportation.
- We walked to the park after class.

Exercise 2

Sentence Elements: Underline the subjects (s), verbs (v), objects of verbs (o), and prepositional phrases (PP) in the following sentences. A transitive verb (vt) is followed by an object, whereas intransitive verbs (vi) are not followed by an object.

- Alex (s) needs (vt) new batteries (o) for his camera (PP)
- Fireworks (s) exploded (vi) in the sky. (PP)
- Sally wore her blue suit to the meeting.
- Adel needs to study for his tests that are coming up.
- Blake went mountain climbing with his friends.
- Monica wore her scarf to school.

Exercise 3

Complete the sentences with appropriate prepositions.

- a) Do you believe _____ ghosts?
- b) Anthony is engaged _____ my cousin
- c) Ms. Ballas substituted _____ our regular teacher.
- d) I can't distinguish one twin _____ the other.
- e) Max is known _____ his honesty.
- f) I'm worried _____ this problem.
- g) I don't agree _____ you.
- h) I'm worried _____ this problem.

Answers

Exercise 3

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| a) In | d) From | g) With |
| b) With | e) For | h) about |
| c) For | f) About | |

Source: Azar, B. (1999). *Understanding and Using English Grammar (3rd ed.)*. Longman