

What Is a Preposition?

1. A **preposition** is a word that shows the relationship between a noun or pronoun to some other word in the sentence.
2. A **preposition** shows how two things are related by indicating such information as **location**, **direction**, or **time**. Another way to identify a preposition is to locate what words answer any of the following questions: **Where?** **When?** or **Which?** Following are a couple of examples:
 - Shopping at the mall after Christmas, I found several bargains.
 - Two prepositional phrases are in this sentence. “*At the mall*” answers where the shopping was done—**location**. “*After Christmas*” answers when the shopping was done—**time**.
 - Two of my neighbor’s dogs occasionally escape from his yard and run into mine.
 - Three prepositional phrases are in this sentence. “*Of my neighbor’s dogs*” answers which “two”—two **dogs**. “*From his yard*” answers where the dogs escaped from—**location**. Similarly, “*into mine*” answers where the dogs ran to—**location**.
3. A **prepositional phrase** is a word group that begins with a preposition and ends with the object of the preposition—a **noun** or **pronoun**. In the above examples the double underlined words are the objects of those prepositional phrases: *mall*, *Christmas*, *dogs*, *yard*, and *mine*.
4. An **important point to remember**: The **subject** of a sentence NEVER appears within a prepositional phrase. See the following examples:
 - **Most** of the students passed the test.
 - The pronoun “*Most*” is the subject, not the noun “*students*.” “*Students*” is the object of the prepositional phrase beginning with the preposition “*of*.”
 - **Two** of my uncles are musicians.
 - The pronoun “*Two*” is the subject, not the noun “*uncles*.” “*Uncles*” is the object of the prepositional phrase beginning with the preposition “*of*.”
5. **Helpful hint**: You can identify most (but not all) prepositions if you think of a box and a baseball. Any word that can describe the relationship of a baseball to the box is a preposition. The baseball can be *in* the box, *on* the box, *near* the box, *behind* the box, *under* the box, *over* the box, etc.

➡ Turn page over for a list of prepositions.

List of Common Prepositions (including compound prepositions)

About	Concerning	On top of
Above	Contrary to	Out
According to	Despite	Out of
Across	Down	Outside
After	Due to	Over
Ahead of	During	Past
Against	Except/excepting	Rather than
Along	Except for	Regarding
Among	For	Round
Apart from	From	Since
Around	In	Than
As	In addition to	Through
As far	In back of	Throughout
As far as	In case of	Till
As well as	In front of	To
At	In regard to	Toward/towards
Back of	Inside	Under
Because of	In spite of	Underneath
Before	Instead of	Unlike
Behind	In view of	Until
Below	Into	Unto
Beneath	Like	Up
Beside/besides	Near	Up to
Between	Next to	Upon
Beyond	Of	With
But (except)	Off	Within
By	On	Without
By means of	On account of	With regard to
By way of	Onto	

