

INTRODUCTION TO PREPOSITIONS

Allow us to introduce you to a very social part of speech, one which can only exist when attached to other words. Meet prepositions and their cohorts, objects. Prepositions are connectors; they most often connect other words in the sentence to a noun or pronoun. Their primary function is to introduce a phrase that shows a relationship to other words in the sentence. Prepositions are so very social that they never stand alone.

There are a few different categories of prepositions, but their names indicate the differences between them.

- 1. Simple Prepositions** prepositions that are composed of just one word
- 2. Compound Prepositions** groups of words that act as one preposition, very often they are too wordy and can be more concisely expressed with a simple preposition.
- 3. Marginal Prepositions** these are just outside the margin of prepositions because they are formed from other parts of speech, usually verbs, but they act as prepositions.

Simple Prepositions: There are well over 65 simple prepositions in the English language. Rather than listing all of them, we supplied a sampling.

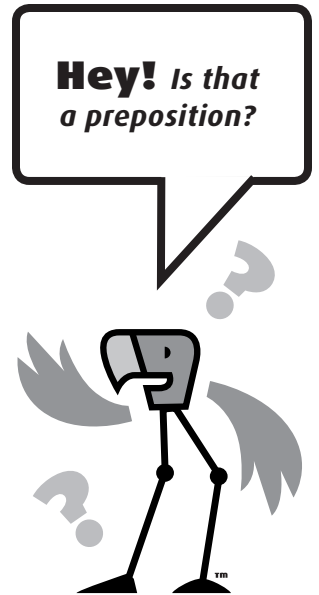
Hint: most prepositions show time (after, before, during) and location (above, against, among) while some are less specific (for, from, to,) in their relationship to other words.

<i>about</i>	<i>amidst</i>	<i>beside</i>	<i>from</i>	<i>per</i>
<i>above</i>	<i>at</i>	<i>between</i>	<i>in</i>	<i>to</i>
<i>after</i>	<i>before</i>	<i>beyond</i>	<i>into</i>	<i>under</i>
<i>against</i>	<i>behind</i>	<i>during</i>	<i>off</i>	<i>up</i>
<i>among</i>	<i>beneath</i>	<i>for</i>	<i>on</i>	<i>with</i>

LOCATION

TIME

Example: We ran home (*from* the park) (*before* the storm).



Student's Guide Prepositions

Compound Prepositions: There are numerous two and three-word compound prepositions in the English language too. Again, these combinations come before a noun or pronoun. Rather than listing all of them, we supplied a sampling.

according to
because of
by reason of
by virtue of

in regard to
in the event of
in lieu of
in spite of

in receipt of
prior to
similar to
with respect to
with regards to

Example: (*According to* the weather report) we needed to run home (*prior to* the storm).

Marginal Prepositions: They are usually verb forms (often verbals) functioning as prepositions.

barring *considering* *excluding* *given* *granted* *pending*

Example: (*Barring* a catastrophe) we will be home in time for dinner.

What is the purpose of prepositions?

They link nouns, pronouns, and phrases to other words in a sentence. They usually indicate a spacial or logical relationship between the object and the rest of the sentence. Can you pick them out? Do you use them to enhance your writing?

Let's see if you are getting the hang of this. In the following sentences put parentheses () around the prepositional phrases:

1. Early in the morning, the bluebirds sing sweet songs.
2. The female bluebird sings in short phrases.
3. Male bluebirds are the more colorful of the species.
4. According to ornithologists, male bluebirds are dark blue with a bright reddish chest.
5. Female bluebirds are a drab gray-blue with a duller reddish chest.

FYI:
After a preposition,
the objective form of a
pronoun must be used!



S

VOLUME 4: PREPOSITIONS, CONJUNCTIONS AND INTERJECTIONS

Answers: 1. (in the morning) 2. (in short phrases) 3. (of the species)
4. (According to ornithologists) (with a bright reddish chest) 5. (with a duller reddish chest)