

# 109 Dependent prepositions

Some words must be followed by a specific preposition, called a dependent preposition. These words can be adjectives, verbs, or nouns.

**See also:**

Types of verbs **49** Singular and plural nouns **69**  
Adjectives **92** Prepositions **105**

## 109.1 ADJECTIVES WITH DEPENDENT PREPOSITIONS

Some adjectives are always followed by the same preposition when used in a sentence.

ADJECTIVE + PREPOSITION

It was **good of** my friend to offer to babysit last night.



Some adjectives can take one of a choice of prepositions in the same sentence without changing their meaning.

You seemed **surprised** **at** their behavior.

"Surprised" can be followed by either "at" or "by" without a change in meaning.

**at**  
**by**



### FURTHER EXAMPLES

The babysitter was **angry about** looking after naughty children.



The children are **impressed by** practical jokes.



My parents are **annoyed with** me for not cleaning my room.



Janine is **tired of** watching children's shows on TV.



My friends are getting **ready for** their new baby.



She is **excited about** going hiking in the mountains.



## 109.2 VERBS WITH DEPENDENT PREPOSITIONS

Some verbs are followed by a specific preposition before an object. Different verbs are followed by different prepositions.

VERB + PREPOSITION



The head chef used to **shout at** the staff to encourage them to work harder.

## FURTHER EXAMPLES

The café was **counting on** the new menu to impress its customers.



The café **advertised for** another chef to join the team.



The head chef **spoke to** the manager about hiring more kitchen staff.



What do you **think about** leaving early on Fridays?



## 109.3 VERBS WITH "TO" OR "FOR"

Some verbs can take either "to" or "for," depending on the context. "To" is usually used when there is a transfer of something, whereas "for" is used when someone benefits from something.



He **sold** the house **to** the family.

[The family bought the house.]



He **sold** the house **for** the family.

[He sold the house on behalf of the family.]

## 109.4 NOUNS WITH DEPENDENT PREPOSITIONS

Some nouns are always followed by the same preposition when used in a sentence.

NOUN + PREPOSITION

I always keep a **photograph of** my family on my desk.



Some nouns can take one of a choice of prepositions in the same sentence without changing their meaning.

"Advantages" can be followed by either "in" or "to" without a change in meaning.



There are **advantages** **{ in to }** moving away to study.

### FURTHER EXAMPLES

It is important to have a positive **attitude toward** studying.



The **cause of** traffic jams is often bad town planning.



I've been working hard to find a **solution to** this problem.



There has been a steady **increase in** students passing their exams.



The **demand for** public buses increases every year.



Take your time planning a **response to** the essay question.



## 109.5 WORDS WITH DIFFERENT DEPENDENT PREPOSITIONS

Some adjectives, verbs, and nouns can be followed by a choice of prepositions. The meaning of the phrase is dependent on which preposition the adjective, verb, or noun is paired with.

I'm **anxious for** my vacation to start.

[I'm excited for my vacation.]



I'm **anxious about** being late for my flight.

[I'm worried I'm going to miss my flight.]



He **talked to** the teacher.

[He had a conversation with the teacher.]



He **talked about** the teacher.

[He had a conversation with someone else, discussing the teacher.]



I have a good **relationship with** my parents.

[The relationship between me and my parents is good.]



The **relationship between** family members is important.

[It's important that family members have a good relationship.]



### FURTHER EXAMPLES

I'm **upset about** how badly my exams went.



I'm **upset with** myself for failing my exams.



The charity needs to **appeal for** more volunteers.



The campaigns **appeal to** students.



Pests are a serious **problem for** farmers.



Farmers have a serious **problem with** pests.

