

# 105 Prepositions

Prepositions are words that are used to show relationships between different parts of a clause, for example relationships of time, place, or reason.

**See also:**

Infinitives and participles **51** Verbs with prepositions **54**  
Singular and plural nouns **69** Personal pronouns **77**

## 105.1 SIMPLE PREPOSITIONS

Prepositions describe the relationship between two other words. They are usually part of a prepositional phrase, which is made up of a preposition followed by an object (a noun, pronoun, or noun phrase).

There's a beautiful park **by** my house.

"By" describes where the park is in relation to the house.



Chrissy goes to the gym **on** Wednesdays.


"On" helps to describe when Chrissy goes to the gym.



## 105.2 COMPLEX PREPOSITIONS

Some prepositions are made up of two words which act as a single unit. They behave the same way as one-word prepositions.

The bank is **next to** the library.



## 105.3 PARALLEL PREPOSITIONS

When the same preposition applies to more than one word in a list, the preposition only needs to be used once.

I sent presents **to** Al and [to] Ed.



When different words need different prepositions, each preposition must be used.

Look **at** and listen **to** the teacher.



## 105.4 PREPOSITIONS AND GERUNDS

If a verb comes immediately after a preposition, it has to be a gerund, which is the “-ing” form of a verb.



**After graduating**, I worked in a hospital.

Preposition

Gerund



### FURTHER EXAMPLES

**Instead of applying** for a job, I went to college.



**After seeing** the job listing, I wrote a cover letter.



## 105.5 PREPOSITIONS AT THE END OF SENTENCES

Prepositions can come in many different places in a sentence, including at the end.

I'm listening **to** some music. ✓

I like having something to listen **to**. ✓



## 105.6 "TO"

“To” can cause confusion because it can be a preposition, but it is also used to form infinitives.

Here, “to” is part of the infinitive verb “to see.” When used like this, it is not a preposition.

Here, “to” is part of the phrasal verb “look forward to,” and is a preposition. Therefore, it must be followed by a noun, pronoun, or gerund.

I'm going **to** see my friends tonight.



I'm looking forward **to seeing** them.

Gerund