

GENERAL ENGLISH

PREPOSITION

A Preposition is a word used or placed before a noun or pronoun. It shows the relation between the noun and something else. A preposition is followed by a "noun". It is never followed by a verb. Knowledge of prepositions is vital as it is a very important area on which questions will be asked in all competitive examinations. Prepositions can be studied under three categories. 1. Simple prepositions. 2. Compound prepositions and 3. Phrase prepositions.

Simple prepositions: Examples- of, in, to, till, at, by, for, from, off, out, with, etc.

Compound prepositions: Examples- beside, within, above, about, across, without, between, etc.

Phrase prepositions: Examples- in course of, in favour of, in case of, according to, by reason of, in the event of, owing to, away from, in compliance with, with reference to, instead of, with an eye to, in comparison to, because of, etc.

Prepositions Showing Time

1. At, in:

At is used with a definite point of time in mind.

E.g. Jim goes to the office at eight.

She will come at Diwali.

In is generally used to denote a specific time, period, month, year.

E.g. I play in the evening.

2. On, by:

On is used with days and dates.

E.g. Mahatma Gandhi was born on 2nd October.

English class is on every Wednesday.

By refers to the latest time by which an action will be over.

E.g. The meeting will be over by 3 p.m.

3. For, since:

For denotes a period of time and is used with the perfect continuous tense.

E.g. I have been working for the last ten years.

She has been waiting for two hours.

Since indicates point of time. It indicates continuity.

E.g. India has been independent since 1947.

4. From:

From refers to the starting point of an action.

E.g. Raju is joining the firm from the 1st of June.

Prepositions Showing Position

1. At, in:

At refers to an exact point.

E.g. He lives at Amberpet.

In refers to a big area.

E.g. He lives in Hyderabad.

2. Between, among:

Between is used to distinguish two persons and things.

E.g. There was a quarrel between the two sisters.

Among is used for more than two persons or things.

E.g. The food is distributed among the boys in the class.

3. Amongst:

Amongst is also used with more than two persons or things but is always used before a vowel.

E.g. Divide the oranges amongst us.

4. Above, below:

Above is used for higher than.

E.g. The aeroplane is flying above the clouds.

Below is used for lower than.

E.g. His output is below ours.

5. Under, beneath:

Under is used for vertically below.

E.g. We sit under the tree when we have no class.

Beneath shows a lower position.

E.g. The ground was soiled beneath her.

Prepositions Showing Direction

1. **To** is used to indicate movement from one place to another.

E.g. The children go to school every morning.

2. **Towards** points out particular direction.

E.g. The Lion ran towards the hunter.

3. **Into** indicates a movement inside something.

E.g. The cat jumped into the well.

4. **At** indicates aim.

E.g. The hunter aimed at the bird.

5. **For** denotes direction.

E.g. I shall start for Gwalior today.

6. **Along** shows the same line.

E.g. I walked along the shore.

7. **Across** means from one side.

E.g. I ran across the street.

8. **From** refers to a point of departure.

E.g. We feel unhappy when we depart from our parents.

9. **Before** denotes face- to-face.

E.g. He was standing before his wife.

10. **Behind** means at the back of someone or something.

E.g. My son stood behind me.

11. **After** refers to a sequence.

E.g. The boy came running after the mother.

12. **Beside** means by the side of.

E.g. John is the person standing beside the window.

13. As a preposition, besides means in addition to.

E.g. Besides the administrators, the teachers were allowed to state their views.

Words Taking More than One Preposition

A large number of words are always followed by a fixed preposition. Example: insist on; instead of; prevent from; But certain words take several prepositions according to the change in meaning of the word. Here is a select list of such words starting with the letter 'A'.

1. Accompany:

A. By (for living being).

The Prime Minister was accompanied by the members of his Cabinet.

B. With (subtle things).

His lecture was accompanied with subtle analysis of concepts.

2. Accountable:

A. To (an authority or a person).

Should the police be more accountable to the public?

B. For (action).

He is accountable for his deeds and misdeeds.

3. Angry:

A. At (a thing). Angry demonstrators jeered at the President.

B. With (a person). I am angry with Shyam.

C. For (for a cause). He is angry with me for keeping him waiting.

4. Annoyed:

A. With (a person). I was annoyed with him because he kept interrupting.

B. At (something). He is annoyed with his friend at his laziness.

5. Answerable:

A. To (a Person). I am answerable to the government for any decision I make.

B. For (something). We are answerable to our parents for our conduct.

6. Appeal:

A. To (person). The police are appealing to the public for any information about the murder victim.

B. For (thing). They are appealing for funds to build a new church.

Some Important Prepositions

A

1. Abound with
2. Absolve from
3. Abstain from
4. According to
5. accordance with
6. Accuse of
7. Accustomed to
8. Acquaint with
9. Acquit of
10. Admit to
11. Averse to
12. Affiliate to/with
13. Afflict with
14. Afraid of
15. Agree to/on
16. Aim at
17. Allegation about
18. Allude to
19. Alternate with
20. Alternative to
21. Appear for
22. Apply to
23. Appreciation of
24. Apprise of
25. Approximate to
26. Arraign against
27. Arrest in
28. Ashamed of
29. Aspire to
30. Associate with
31. Assure of
32. Attribute to
33. Averse from

B

1. Begin on
2. Belief in
3. Bereft of
4. Beset with
5. Beware of
6. Blink at
7. Blow down
8. Boast of
9. Break off
10. Bungle over
11. Busy with
12. Busy in

The stock of prepositions mentioned above are limited to the letters 'A' and 'B' from the alphabet set. We shall see the rest in the next session.

Practice Test

1. Nobody wanted to work _____ New Year's Day.
A) On B) in C) at D) through E) by
2. I met him _____ the afternoon.
A) By B) in C) on D) to E) for
3. I did things differently _____ the New Year.
A) On B) at C) in D) by E) to
4. My dog used to be scared _____ night.
A) On B) in C) to D) at E) for
5. You could not go shopping _____ working hours.
A) On B) for C) at D) to E) in
6. He had breakfast _____ eight o' clock.
A) In B) at C) on D) to E) under
7. She made a very good plan _____ once.
A) In B) on C) at D) since E) by
8. Many of Europe's great cathedrals were built _____ the Middle Ages.
A) On B) at C) to D) in E) since
9. He wrote again _____ four weeks time.
A) on B) for C) at D) to E) in
10. One of the policemen was killed _____ a knife.
A) By B) at C) how D) as E) with
11. How long have you been here _____?
A) For B) since C) at D) on E) between
12. I will be back again on Tuesday. I should be all right again _____ then.
A) By B) at C) on D) in E) with

13. I came _____ vain.
A) On B) at C) in D) through E) with
14. If you are _____ doubt do not hesitate to contact me.
A) On B) at C) by D) to E) in
15. The Indian railway workers have been _____ strike for two weeks now.
A) On B) in C) at D) by E) to
16. Rewrite the important parts of the letter _____ bold, will you?
A) In B) on C) at D) with E) to
17. Currently many countries in the world are _____ war.
A) In B) on C) at D) by E) to
18. I really enjoyed the party. All _____ all it was a successful one.
A) At B) on C) by D) with E) in
19. I know it was not an accident. You did it _____ purpose.
A) On B) in C) at D) with E) to
20. I saw it _____ TV.
A) On B) in C) to D) with E) by
21. He had to repent _____ what he had done.
A) At B) of C) over D) for E) in
22. A good judge never gropes _____ the conclusion.
A) To B) at C) on D) for E) with
23. She thought that her father was not happy _____ her.
A) With B) about C) for D) at E) over
24. A study mind triumphs _____ difficulties.
A) In B) over C) at D) with E) against

ANSWERS: 1. A; 2. B; 3. C; 4. D; 5. E; 6. B; 7. C; 8. D; 9. E; 10. E; 11. A; 12. A; 13. C; 14. E; 15. A; 16. A; 17. C; 18. E; 19. A; 20. A; 21. D; 22. D; 23. A; 24. B.