Prepositions

Prepositions are the words that indicate location and time, and they almost always come in phrases. Check out the examples below.

The puppy runs to the food bowl. The black puppy is to the right of the others.

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE FORMULA
A prepositional phrase consists of a preposition plus a noun, and sometimes modifiers of the noun such as adjectives and articles come in between.

Preposition (+ Optional Modifiers) + Noun

In the spring, I always vow to plant tomatoes but end up buying them at the store.

Prep. Noun

Prep. Noun

COMMON PREPOSITIONS

About  Behind  From  Of  Toward
Above  Below  In  Off  Under
According to  Beneath  In addition to  On  Underneath
Across  Beside  In back of  On top of  Unlike
After  Between  In case of  Onto  Until
Against  Beyond  In front of  Out  Up
Along  By  In place of  Out of  Up to
Along with  By means of  In spite of  Outside  Upon
Among  Concerning  Including  Over  With
Apart from  Despite  Inside  Past  Without
Around  Down  Instead of  Regarding  Round
As  During  Into  Since  Through
As for  Except  Like  Throughout
At  Except for  Near  To
Because of  Excepting  Next
Before  For

Adapted from Washington State University 2016
PREPOSITIONS OF TIME

At designates specific times.

*The train is due at 12:15 p.m.*

On designates days and dates.

*My brother is coming on Monday.*

*We’re having a party on the Fourth of July.*

In designates nonspecific times during a day, a month, a season, or a year.

*She likes to jog in the morning.*

*It’s too cold in winter to run outside.*

For designates measuring time (seconds, minutes, hours, days, months, years).

*He held his breath for seven minutes.*

*The British and Irish have been quarreling for seven centuries.*

Since is used with a specific date or time.

*He’s worked here since 1970.*

*She’s been sitting in the waiting room since two-thirty.*

PREPOSITIONS OF PLACE

At is used for specific addresses.

*Grammar English lives at 55 Boretz Road in Durham.*

On is used to designate names of streets, avenues, etc.

*Her house is on Boretz Road.*

In is used for the names of land-areas (towns, counties, states, countries, and continents).

*She lives in Durham. Durham is in Windham County.*

*Note: With downstairs, downtown, inside, outside, upstairs, and uptown we use no preposition.*

PREPOSITIONS OF MOVEMENT

To is used in order to express movement toward a place.

*They were driving to work together.*

*She’s going to the dentist’s office this morning.*

Toward and towards are also helpful prepositions to express movement. These are simply variant spellings of the same word; use whichever sounds better to you.

*We’re moving toward the light.*

*This is a big step towards the project’s completion.*

*Note: With home, downtown, uptown, inside, outside, downstairs, and upstairs, we use no preposition*