

FIRST
EDITION

ACADA ACE TUTOR'S

IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH

SPECIAL GUIDE TO
*ENGLISH GRAMMAR,
PUNCTUATION, AND SPELLING.*

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PREPOSITIONS:

All you need to know

In this material, you will see the following:

- Meaning of preposition
- Types of preposition.
- Can a sentence end with a preposition?
- **Unnecessary prepositions**
 - The six (6) rules guiding the proper use of prepositions
- **Practice Questions**

Meaning of preposition

Prepositions tell us **where** or **when** something is in relation to something else. When monsters are approaching, it's good to have these special words to tell us **where** those monsters are. Are they **behind** us or **in front of** us? Will they be arriving **in** three seconds or **at** midnight?

Prepositions often tell us where one **noun** is in relation to another (e.g., *the coffee is **on** the table **beside** you*).

But they can also indicate more abstract ideas, such as purpose or contrast

- (e.g., *We went **for** a walk **despite** the rain*).

Types of prepositions

- Prepositions indicate direction, time, location, and spatial relationships, as well as other abstract types of relationships.
- **Direction:** Look **to** the left and you'll see our destination.
- **Time:** We've been working **since** this morning.
- **Location:** We saw a movie **at** the theater.
- **Space:** The dog hid **under** the table.

Unfortunately, there's no reliable formula for determining which preposition to use with a particular combination of words. The best way to learn which prepositions go with which words is to read as much high-quality writing as you can and pay attention to which combinations sound right.

Examples

- I should rewrite the introduction **of** my essay.
- Sam left his jacket **in** the car.
- Did you send that letter **to** your mother?
- We're cooking **for** six guests tonight.
- Olubusola ate lunch **with** his boss.

Can a sentence end with a preposition?

Yes, a sentence can be ended with a preposition. The old claim that it's wrong to end a sentence with a preposition has been utterly debunked. It's not true and it never was true.

Writers who always insist that a preposition can't end a sentence often end up with stilted and unnatural sentences:

- There's no one else to hide behind. (Grammatically correct and natural)
- **There's no one else behind whom to hide.** (Grammatically correct, but unnatural)
- Where did you come from? (Grammatically correct and natural)
- **From where did you come?** (Grammatically correct, but unnatural)

That said, it is sometimes more elegant to move a preposition to an earlier spot in a sentence, especially in very serious and formal writing. But if you do move the preposition, remember to **delete** it from the end.

- **Correct:** This is something we must meditate on.
- **Correct:** This is something on which we must meditate.
- **Incorrect:** This is something on which we must meditate on.

Unnecessary prepositions

One of the most common preposition mistakes is adding an unnecessary *at* to the end of a question.

- Where is your mother **at**?

Although this is common in some English dialects, it's considered an error in writing.

You can fix the problem by simply deleting the '**at**'.

- Where is your mother?

On the bright side, if you're not sure which preposition to use, sometimes you can just get rid of it altogether. In fact, you should always get rid of unnecessary prepositional phrases. Too many prepositions can be a sign of flabby writing. Look at how many prepositions appear in the sentence below:

- **For** many people, the reality **of** an entry **into** a new area **of** employment is cause **for** a host **of** anxieties.

Getting rid of the prepositions forces you to tighten up the sentence. The result is shorter, more direct, and easier to understand:

- Changing careers makes many people anxious.

Here's another example:

- Alex hit the baseball **up over** the fence.
- Get rid of the **up**. You don't need it:

Six (6) rules for using preposition correctly

You need a license to drive a car, but for some reason, you don't need a license to use prepositions. It is true that small relative words like **with**, **of** and **over** are not as dangerous as a two-ton truck, and prepositional use is not as complicated as parallel parking on a busy street. But just like studying the traffic manual, learning the rules of prepositions can get you where you want to go – grammatically.

Rule 1: Choose the right preposition

We use prepositions (such as in, between, on, among, around, etc.) to indicate the position, location, or direction of a noun. But different types of prepositions work in different ways, so make sure your preposition says what you mean.

Examples

- They walked **in** the house. (The preposition **in** Shows location - they walked **inside** the house.)
- They walked **into** the house. (The preposition **into** shows **direction** — they entered the house.)

- Joyce sat **between** her friends. (The preposition between shows one friend on **either** side of Joyce.)
- Joyce sat **among** her friends. (The preposition among shows friends all **around** Joyce.)

Rule 2: Match the verbs and prepositions correctly

Phrasal verbs (verb + preposition) are very common in written and spoken English. But they only make sense if you use the correct preposition with the original verb.

Examples

- Bimpe should **listen to** our advice.
- Let's **clean up** this mess.
- Can you **look after** my little sister?
- Hafsa always **shows off** her new shoes.

Rule 3: Use an Object after a preposition

The noun or pronoun (called the object of the preposition) must always follow the preposition. Gerunds, which look like verbs but function like nouns, can also be objects of prepositions.

Examples

- The fish was **next to** the crab. (The noun **the crab** is the object of the preposition **next to**.)
- Place the spoon **by** the knife. (The noun **the knife** is the object of the preposition **by**.)
- These books are for **skiing**. (The gerund, **skiing**, functions as the object of the preposition **for**.)

Rule 4: Use an Object after a preposition

Although ending a sentence with a preposition is generally accepted in informal writing, it is deprecated in formal writing. This is because of **Rule 3** - **prepositions must have an object**. If the preposition is at the end of a sentence, it has no object.

Examples

- The table is **where** I put my books **on**.
- Can I **turn in** my homework **after**?
- Who does the prize go **to**?

In most cases, you can easily rewrite the sentence to avoid ending in a preposition, or add a prepositional object to clarify the meaning.

- The table is **where** I keep my books. (Delete **on**)
- Can I submit my homework **after** school? (Added school after the preposition)
- Who won the prize? (Rewrite the sentence with the verb **won**)

Rule 5: Never substitute “Have” for “Of”

A common grammatical error is substituting **have** with **of** a sentence, especially when using modal verbs such as should, could, and would.

Examples

- **Incorrect** - I should **of** come over.
- **Incorrect** - He could **of** helped if he wanted.
- **Incorrect** - We would **of** been late if we’d missed the train.

People say in the place of **have** in these situations, no preposition is needed here as it does not indicate the position or location of the noun. These sentences require the auxiliary verb, **have**.

- I should **have** come
- He could **have** helped if he wanted.
- If we **had** missed the train, we would **have** been late.

Rule 6: Use object pronouns after prepositions

Pronouns help you avoid repeating nouns in your sentences. However, using a subject pronoun (I, she, he, we, they, who) after a preposition is grammatically incorrect.

Examples

- Incorrect - This is **between** **he** and **I**.
- Incorrect - Can Katie go **with** **they**?
- Incorrect - You went **to** the dance **with** **who**?

Use object pronouns (**me, you, her, him, it, us, them, who**) when they serve as the object of a preposition. (**You** and **it** have the same subject and object.)

- This is **between** **him** and **me**.
- Can Aisha go **with** **them**?
- You went to the dance **with** **whom**?

Practice Questions

INSTRUCTION: Pick the correct option from the options lettered A-D

- We went out the rain.
 - Although
 - Despite
 - Nonetheless
 - However
- having a headache, I enjoyed the party.
 - Despite
 - After
 - Between
 - Over
- I had worked very hard, I failed my exam.
 - Although
 - Despite
 - Until
 - Before
- There is a school my house.
 - Beside
 - Above
 - Beneath
 - On
- If the bus stop is on the same side of the road as the library, it is the library.
 - In front of
 - Above
 - At front of
 - Inside
- If the garage is on the other side of the road as the school, it is the school.
 - Over
 - Above
 - Opposite
 - Adjacent

7. She insisted paid at once.
- To being
 - On being
 - To be
 - Of being
8. The armed robbers stabbed the driver _____ the back
- At
 - On
 - In
 - From
9. Jolomi was careful not to fall _____ Ameen's tricks
- Into
 - For
 - In
 - with
10. The members of the other team agreed _____ all the terms of the contract
- By
 - To
 - On
 - With
11. He is _____ Kaduna _____ official assignment.
- In/on
 - At/in
 - At/for
 - For/in
12. _____ his illness, Muhammad could not come to school.
- Owing
 - Due to
 - Referring
 - With reference
13. I was often angry _____ Oluwani since he differed _____ me often
- Against/from
 - With/with
 - About/with
 - With/to
14. The man is refurbishing the flat with a view to _____ it.
- Selling
 - Sell
 - Be selling
 - Have sold
15. As we sat _____ the silence, my eyes _____ the room.
- in/roamed
 - under/looked
 - along/observed

- d. over/surrounded**
16. . For beating _____ his course mate, Agbaji was _____ from the university.
- a. Up/rusticated
 - b. On/expelled
 - c. At/removed
 - d. Away/sent out**
17. She refrained _____ smoking.
- a. At
 - b. Off
 - c. From
 - d. In**
18. . Judging _____ his face, he is not guilty.
- a. At
 - b. Through
 - c. With
 - d. By**
19. If you want to succeed in life don't be envious _____ other people's achievement.
- a. Of
 - b. To
 - c. With
 - d. On**
20. The bone was _____ the dog.
- a. About
 - b. For
 - c. After
 - d. Considering**

Send your answers to me

If you come across the book anywhere, and you see it necessary to answer the questions in it, you can send you answers to my [mail](#) or personal [whatsapp](#) number. I will do well to mark it and send you the result.

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