

Topic: Prepositions and Prepositional Phrases

PREPOSITION

A preposition is a word which shows relationship between two things in other words, a preposition is a word placed before a noun or a noun equivalent in order to make its relationship with another word in the sentence. Prepositions are mostly single words used before a pronoun, noun, noun phrase, or verb to express their relationship with the rest of the sentence. They are used to show when something happens (prepositions of time), where something happens (prepositions of place), or where something is going (prepositions of movement).

There are many prepositions, examples are: about, above, after, along, among, before, behind, beside, between, by, for, from, in, into, like, near, of, off, on, over, to, since, through, under, until, up, with, within, without.

A preposition can also be a two-word or three-word combination. It is called a compound preposition. Two-word compound prepositions include according to, because of, different from, due to, and instead of. Some examples of three-word compound prepositions are as far as, in addition to, in front of, and in spite of. There are many more two-word and three-word compound prepositions.

Same preposition can be used for different expressions.

He had a chicken and chips **at** break time. (Preposition used to indicate time.)

We will wait for you **at** the zoo. (Indicates place)

I shall meet you **at** 5pm **on** Sunday **near** the Subway.

Same feeling can use different prepositions.

I got angry with him for arriving late.

He was angry at their lack of efficiency.

We are very angry about plans to build a coal mine near our house.

Prepositions are mostly little words that are used before a Noun or Pronoun to show its relation to some other word in the sentence. In other words, prepositions link a noun or pronoun to

another noun or pronoun in a sentence. Prepositions are used to show when something happens, (prepositions of time), where something happens (prepositions of place) or where something is going (prepositions of direction).

Examples:

The cup is on the chair. (indicates a place or position: on the chair)

We ran towards the zoo. (indicates direction: towards the zoo)

There are many prepositions, examples include:

about, after, along, among, before, behind, beside, between, by, for, from, in, into, like, near, of, off, over, to, since, through, under, with, within, without

FORMS OF PREPOSITION

1. Simple or common preposition
2. Compound or complex preposition

- **Simple or Common preposition:** It refers to a simple preposition. It occurs as a single word.

Examples

In, about, off, at, over, of, under, for e.t.c

Se sat **on** the sofa

He fell **off** the ladder

The cat was hiding **under** the bed

- **Compound Prepositions:** They are prepositions containing more than a word. Two-word compound prepositions (according to, aside from, because of, next to, etc).
 - **According to** his sister, he fell asleep on the airplane.
 - The detective didn't know he was sitting **next to** a wanted man.

Three-word compound prepositions (as far as, in addition to, in front of, in spite of, on account of, etc)

- The bomb blast could be heard **as far as** the gas station, which is 20 kilometers away.
- **In addition to** a mango tree in his backyard, he also has a cherry tree **in front**

Other Examples of Compound Prepositions are:

Within, into, below, Inside, without, unto, between e.t.c

Examples of Complex prepositions are double prepositional words such as:

Outside of, From behind, Out of, From beneath

Examples

1. Suddenly he emerged **from behind** the curtain
2. He walked **out of** the compound

This is also participate preposition they are verbs ending in (-ing) but functioning as a preposition.

Examples

Concerning Notwithstanding

Considering Pending

1. You did the job well, **considering** your age and inexperience

Note: Prepositions indicate time, place, direction, agent and instrument.

TYPES OF PREPOSITIONS

Preposition of Time

Prepositions of time indicate the period of time that something happens (during, from, since, throughout, until, etc)

- I had a couple of terrifying nightmares **during** the night.
- Tolu swore never to talk to me again **from** tomorrow.

Prepositions of time used to indicate a particular time (at, by, in, on, etc)

- I had a quarrel with my friend **at** break time.
- The Party should be over **by** noon.

Prepositions of time used to indicate a particular time in relation to another (after, before, etc)

- I start to wonder whether I will be in Heaven or Hell **after** death.

- I usually brush my teeth **before** having my breakfast.

Preposition of Place

Prepositions of place tell us the position of something (across, in, inside, on, outside, etc).

- The newly built house **across** the gas station just collapsed.
- There was a fly **in** my cup of coffee.

Prepositions of place tell us the position of something in relation to another (behind, beside, between, in front, near, etc).

- **Behind** his room was a big black cat.
- I sat **beside** a snoring lady in the cinema.
- Someone parked a taxi **in front** of my car

Preposition of Direction

These prepositions show direction of movement to somewhere (into, onto, to, etc).

- A fly got **into** his soup while he was eating it.
- I must have put the pumpkin **onto** someone else's trolley in the supermarket.

These prepositions show direction of movement from somewhere (away from, from, off, etc).

- He warned them to keep **away from** his daughter.
- The strong wind blew the wig **off** the woman's head

USING PREPOSITIONS – Correct usage

Prepositions are simple words, but they are not as easy to use as they appear to be. If used wrongly, they become adverbs or conjunctions and convey different meaning.

A preposition is followed by a noun or a pronoun.

We go jogging every day **after** work. (Preposition)

(The preposition is **after** and is followed by the noun **work**.)

An adverb comes after a verb and is not followed by an object.

We got here not so long ago and she arrived **after**. (Adverb)

(**After** is an adverb that comes after the verb **arrived**.)

A conjunction has a clause that comes after it.

We arrived **after** he had left. (Conjunction)

(The clause **he had left** comes after the conjunction **after**.)

Examples

Using the preposition **until**:

- She was up **until** 2:00am watching the movie. (Preposition)
- She stayed under the shed **until** the rain stopped. (Conjunction)

Using the preposition **as**:

- She's got a job **as** a content writer. (Preposition)
- The husband was fat, and his wife was just **as** fat. (Adverb)
- We watched **as** she was beating the dog. (Conjunction)

Using the preposition **but**:

- He didn't tell anyone **but** his father. (Preposition)
- We have **but** one week to meet the deadline. (Adverb)
- You are not only my course mate **but** also my best friend. (Conjunction)

Using the preposition **round**:

- We walked **round** the Zoo watching all the animals. (Preposition)
- They gathered **round** to listen to his encounter with a wild pig. (Adverb)
- In that tree, I saw two big, **round** eyes which must be the owl's. (Adjective)

Using the preposition **inside**:

- Beautiful pictures can be found **inside** the book. (Preposition)
- The magazine has beautiful pictures of wedding gowns **inside**. (Adverb)
- The **inside** pages of the text book has some diagrams. (Adjective)

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE

A prepositional phrase is a phrase that starts with a preposition and ends with a noun or a pronoun. It also means a group of words made up of a preparation, its objects and any of the objects modifiers. Prepositional phrases are groups of words containing prepositions. Remember that prepositions are words that indicate the relationships between various elements within a sentence, and you'll never have difficulty identifying prepositional phrases.

A prepositional phrase may be:

1. A noun phrase
- In the classroom

- Across the road
 - At the bank
2. A wh-clause
- From what Bobola said
 - In what Mike has said
3. Verb in the –ing clause
- By annoying her husband, She lost his favour
 - On crossing the street, he saw the corpse

A prepositional phrase is a group of words that lacks either a verb or a subject, and that functions as a unified part of speech. It normally consists of a preposition and a noun or a preposition and a pronoun.

Remember the following rules for prepositional phrases and you will find that using them becomes much easier.

- Prepositional phrases always consist of two basic parts at minimum: the object and the preposition.
- In formal English, prepositions are almost always followed by objects.
- Adjectives can be placed between the prepositions and objects in prepositional phrases.
- Prepositional phrases can act as adverbs or adjectives. When they are used as adjectives, they modify nouns and pronouns in the same way single-word adjectives do.
- When prepositional phrases are used as adverbs, they do the same way single-word adverbs and adverb clauses do, modifying adjectives, verbs, and other adverbs.

Examples of Prepositional Phrases

The following sentences contain examples of prepositional phrases; the prepositional phrase in each sentence is italicized for easy identification.

The cupcake *with sprinkles* is yours.

The cupcake *with sugar sprinkles* is yours.

We climbed *down the hill*.

We climbed *down the very rough hill*.

The children ran *through the garden*.

The children ran *through the perfectly manicured garden*.

ANTONYMS

An Antonym is a word that is opposite in meaning to another word.

The term **antonym** is commonly taken to be synonymous with opposite, but antonym also has other more restricted meanings. Graded (or gradable) antonyms are word pairs whose meanings are opposite and which lie on a continuous spectrum (hot, cold).

These are words that are opposite in meaning. It comes from the Greek work “anti” for opposite and “onym” for name since language is complex for most people at times, and people are usually confused on what words are truly opposite in meaning to other words.

An antonym is one of a pair of words with opposite meanings. Each word in the pair is the antithesis of the other. A word may have more than one antonym. There are three categories of antonyms identified by the nature of the relationship between the opposed meanings. Where the two words have definitions that lie on a continuous spectrum of meaning, they are gradable antonyms. Where the meanings do not lie on a continuous spectrum and the words have no other lexical relationship, they are complementary antonyms. Where the two meanings are opposite only within the context of their relationship, they are relational antonyms.

Opposites are simultaneously different and similar in meaning. Typically, they differ in only one dimension of meaning, but are similar in most other respects, including similarity in grammar and positions of semantic abnormality. Additionally, not all words have an opposite. Some words are non-opposable. For example, animal or plant species have no binary opposites (other than possible gender opposites such as lion/lioness, etc.); the word platypus therefore has no word that stands in opposition to it (hence the unanswerability of *What is the opposite of platypus?*).

HOW TO ARRIVE AT THE CORRECT ANTONYM OF A WORD

1. The first step for finding a suitable antonym for a word is to work out the meaning of the first word from the context.
2. The second step is to think of a word which is opposite in meaning to the word.
3. Sometimes two or more words may have opposite meanings but you have to look for a word which is more directly opposite to the word in question.

CATEGORIES OF ANTONYMS

1. Graded antonyms
2. Complementary antonyms

3. Relational antonyms
4. Antonyms by adding prefix

EXPLANATION

1. GRADABLE ANTONYMS

It deals with levels of meaning of words like if something is not good, it may still not be bad. It may be average, fair excellent, terrible, poor or satisfactory.

Examples:

WORD	ANTONYM
Fat	Skinny
Risky	Safe
Last	First
Pretty	Ugly
Excited	Bored
Early	Late
Dull	Interesting
Rich	Poor
Simple	Challenging
Empty	Full
Soft	Hard

2. COMPLIMENTARY ANTONYMS

It has a relationship where there is no middle ground. There are only two possibilities either one or this other. A complementary antonym is one of a pair of words with opposite meanings, where the two meanings do not lie on a continuous spectrum. There is no continuous spectrum between push and pull but they are opposite in meaning and are therefore complementary antonyms. Complementary antonyms cannot be graded and are mutually exclusive. That is, they can exist independently of each other. For example, there might be a **daughter** in a family but not the complementary opposite of a **son**, as **girls** can exist without their complementary opposite of **boys**.

Examples

WORD	ANTONYM
Wet	Dry
Yes	No
Silence	Noise

Fantasy	Reality
Question	Answer
Hired	Fired
Pass	Fail
Exit	Entrance
Push	Pull
On	Off
Dead	Alive

3. RELATIONAL ANTONYMS

They are sometimes considered as sub-category of complementary antonyms with their pairs, for there to be a relationship both must exist. A Relational antonym is one of a pair of words with opposite meanings, where opposite makes sense only in the context of the relationship between the two meanings. There is no lexical opposite of teacher, but teacher and pupil are opposite within the context of their relationship. This makes them relational antonyms. Relational Antonyms are pairs of opposites where one cannot exist without the other. For example to have a **husband**, you must have a **wife**. Therefore, **husband** and **wife** are relational antonyms.

Examples:

WORD	ANTONYM
Husband	Wife
Buy	Sell
Doctor	Patient
Behind	Ahead
Parent	Child
Borrow	Lend
Coach	Learn
Above	Below
Employer	Employee

4. PREFIX ANTONYMS

Antonym by adding a prefix sometimes, an antonym can be easily made by adding a prefix.

Examples

WORD	ANTONYM
Likely	Unlikely
Fortunate	Unfortunate
Able	Unable

Forgiving

unforgiving

Note: Antonyms can be almost opposite in meaning or opposite in meaning. Antonym in isolation is different in a context.

THE CONSONANTS /l/ and /r/

These two sounds are often confused especially when they follow each other like /p/, /b/ and /f/. To make the /r/ sound, you let the tip of your tongue nearly touch your alveolar ridge. But when you make the /l/ sound, you let the tip of your tongue touch the ridge and you also force air to escape from both sides of your tongue.

/l/

Flesh

Pleasant

Blouse

Player

/r/

Fresh

Present

Browse

Prayer