

Prepositions for Time, Place, and Introducing Objects

One point in time

On is used with days:

- I will see you on Monday.
- The week begins on Sunday.

At is used with noon, night, midnight, and with the time of day:

- My plane leaves at noon.
- The movie starts at 6 p.m.

In is used with other parts of the day, with months, with years, with seasons:

- He likes to read in the afternoon.
- The days are long in August.
- The book was published in 1999.
- The flowers will bloom in spring.

Extended time

To express extended time, English uses the following prepositions: **since, for, by, from—to, from—until, during, (with)in**

- She has been gone since yesterday. (*She left yesterday and has not returned.*)
- I'm going to Paris for two weeks. (*I will spend two weeks there.*)
- The movie showed from August to October. (*Beginning in August and ending in October.*)
- The decorations were up from spring until fall. (*Beginning in spring and ending in fall.*)
- I watch TV during the evening. (*For some period of time in the evening.*)
- We must finish the project within a year. (*No longer than a year.*)

Place

To express notions of place, English uses the following prepositions: to talk about the point itself: **in**, to express something contained: **inside**, to talk about the surface: **on**, to talk about a general vicinity, **at**.

- There is a wasp in the room.
- Put the present inside the box.
- I left your keys on the table.
- She was waiting at the corner.

Higher than a point

To express notions of an object being higher than a point, English uses the following prepositions: ***over, above***.

- He threw the ball over the roof.
- Hang that picture above the couch.

Lower than a point

To express notions of an object being lower than a point, English uses the following prepositions: ***under, underneath, beneath, below***.

- The rabbit burrowed under the ground.
- The child hid underneath the blanket.
- We relaxed in the shade beneath the branches.
- The valley is below sea-level.

Close to a point

To express notions of an object being close to a point, English uses the following prepositions: ***near, by, next to, between, among, opposite***.

- She lives near the school.
- There is an ice cream shop by the store.
- An oak tree grows next to my house
- The house is between Elm Street and Maple Street.
- I found my pen lying among the books.
- The bathroom is opposite that room.

To introduce objects of verbs

English uses the following prepositions to introduce objects of the following verbs.

At: *glance, laugh, look, rejoice, smile, stare*

- She glanced at her reflection.
(*exception with **mirror**: She glanced in the mirror.*)
- You didn't laugh at his joke.
- I'm looking at the computer monitor.
- We rejoiced at his safe rescue.
- That pretty girl smiled at you.
- Stop staring at me.

Of: *approve, consist, smell*

- I don't approve of his speech.
- My contribution to the article consists of many pages.
- He came home smelling of alcohol.

Of (or about): *dream, think*

- I dream of finishing college in four years.
- Can you think of a number between one and ten?
- I am thinking about this problem.

For: *call, hope, look, wait, watch, wish*

- Did someone call for a taxi?
- He hopes for a raise in salary next year.
- I'm looking for my keys.
- We'll wait for her here.
- You go buy the tickets and I'll watch for the train.
- If you wish for an "A" in this class, you must work hard.