Prepositions Used in Sentences

A preposition is never used by itself in a sentence. Instead, it appears as part of a phrase containing one or more other words.

A preposition in a sentence always introduces a prepositional phrase.

Prepositional Phrases

A prepositional phrase is a group of words that begins with a preposition and ends with a noun or pronoun. The noun or pronoun following the preposition is the object of the preposition.

Some prepositional phrases contain just two words—the preposition and its object. Others are longer because they contain modifiers.

EXAMPLES

- in soil
  preposition object

- from the rain forest
  preposition object

- in place of the older, cracked phone
  preposition object

- inside the large, comfortable car
  preposition object

- with you
  preposition object

- according to the new principal
  preposition object

Prepositional phrases convey information about location, time, or direction or provide details. (See Chapter 23 to learn about prepositional phrases and their influence on subject–verb agreement.)
Preposition or Adverb?

Some words can be used either as prepositions or as adverbs. The following chart lists some examples. When the word is used as a preposition, it begins a prepositional phrase and is followed by the object of the preposition. If the word has no object, it is probably being used as an adverb.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREPOSITION OR ADVERB</th>
<th>PREPOSITION</th>
<th>ADVERB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>above</td>
<td>outside</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after</td>
<td>past</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>around</td>
<td>underneath</td>
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<td>before</td>
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<td>inside</td>
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<td>out</td>
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PREPOSITION The broken shutter was **outside** the house.

ADVERB The man saw the broken shutter **outside**.

PREPOSITION He appeared **before** the class.

ADVERB He had not heard that **before**.

PREPOSITION The man drove **past** the food store.

ADVERB The car drove **past** quickly.

PREPOSITION He sat **inside** the restaurant.

ADVERB Please go **inside** now.

PREPOSITION The beautician stood **behind** her client.

ADVERB Ann waited **behind**.

PREPOSITION The children waited **near** the playground.

ADVERB I like that the stores are very **near**.

See Practice 16.1E
See Practice 16.1G
See Practice 16.1H
**Practice 16.1C** Recognizing Prepositional Phrases

Read the sentences. Write the prepositional phrase in each sentence, and underline the object of the preposition.

**EXAMPLE**
This old trunk is covered with dust.

**ANSWER**
with dust

1. The woman in the black coat dropped her purse.
2. Not many people stayed until the end.
3. The golfer hit a ball into the pond.
4. Everyone except Ashley brought lunch.
5. Birds start singing at daybreak.
6. Mrs. Dominguez received a basket of fruit.
7. Keep your papers inside your notebook.
8. He handed the ball to me.
9. We sat around the table discussing the book.
10. That’s my brother leaning against the wall.

**Practice 16.1D** Distinguishing Prepositions and Prepositional Phrases

Read the sentences. Write the prepositional phrases. Then, underline the preposition in each phrase.

**EXAMPLE**
Scrabble is among my favorite games.

**ANSWER**
among my favorite games

11. Two ferries go across that river.
12. There is a fascinating world beneath the ocean.
13. The guests are playing croquet on the lawn.
14. There was a long line outside the theater.
15. The new student is from Alabama.
16. I have a gift for you.
17. You can come through the front door.
18. Your phone fell out of your pocket.
19. Please do not stand in front of the window.
20. We can talk about the schedule later.

**Speaking Application**

With a partner, take turns describing the location of an object in the room. Use at least two prepositional phrases. Your partner should listen for and identify the prepositional phrases and the objects of each preposition.

**Writing Application**

Write directions to your home from school. Underline the prepositional phrases in your directions.
**PRACTICE 16.1E**  
**Distinguishing Prepositions and Adverbs**

Read the sentences. Label each underlined word *preposition or adverb*.

**EXAMPLE**  
Evan left his bicycle *outside*.  
**ANSWER**  
adverb

1. Let’s go *in* now.  
2. I have not seen Dave *around* lately.  
3. The noise *outside* the apartment was distracting.  
4. I’ve been to that deli *before*.  
5. My notebook fell *behind* the desk.  
6. We will have to go *around* the construction site.  
7. Set your bundles *down* onto the table.  
8. Dad needs to repair the hole *in* the fence.  
9. We need to be home *before* 9:00 P.M.  
10. Del lives just *down* the street from me.

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**PRACTICE 16.1F**  
**Supplying Prepositions and Prepositional Phrases**

Read the sentences. Then, expand each sentence by adding a prepositional phrase that begins with the preposition in parentheses.

**EXAMPLE**  
You may do your research. *(on)*  
**ANSWER**  
You may do your research *on the Internet*.

11. The tree will be cut down. *(by)*  
12. The ball sailed. *(over)*  
13. Our game was postponed. *(with)*  
14. Malika baked banana bread. *(for)*  
15. Everyone listened intently. *(during)*  
16. Construction will begin soon. *(of)*  
17. The child was crying. *(in)*  
18. I can’t go. *(without)*  
19. Why don’t you use this pen? *(instead of)*  
20. You need to make up your mind. *(prior to)*

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**SPEAKING APPLICATION**

With a partner, say a sentence using one of these words: *below, inside*. Your partner should identify whether you used the word as an adverb or a preposition.

**WRITING APPLICATION**

Write this sentence three times, expanding it with two different prepositional phrases each time: *A student dropped a book.*