

Prepositions¹

about	at	by	like	through
above	before	down	near	to
across	behind	during	of	toward
after	below	except	off	under
against	beneath	for	on	underneath
along	beside	from	onto	until
amid	between	in	over	up
among	beyond	inside	past	upon
around	but	into	since	with
within				
without				

Prepositions: A preposition describes a relationship between other words in a sentence. They are usually combined with nouns to make **prepositional phrases**, which show a relationship in time or space. Without nouns, prepositions are difficult to define and meaningless.

*For example: We were **at**. (You were **at** where? The mall? **Mall** is a noun.)

We were **at the mall**. (Prepositional phrase: shows your relationship to space.)

When prepositional phrases introduce a sentence, a comma is needed.

*For example: **Except** for my brother, my family loves going to the mall.

Otherwise, do not break up a prepositional phrase with a comma.

*For Example: The mall has a food court **with**, two Chinese restaurants. (**Incorrect**, no comma is needed. It should be written like this: The mall has a food court with two Chinese restaurants.)

Prepositions to take special notice of: **in, on, at**

With **time**:

- **at**: designate specific time. Ex: We will meet you **at** noon at the mall.
- **on**: designate specific days and dates. Ex: We are going to the mall **on** Sunday.
- **in**: designate nonspecific times during a day, month, year, or season. Ex: We like to go to the mall in the evening.

With **place**:

- **at**: designate specific address. Ex: I live at 555 Banana Drive.
- **on**: designate names of streets. Ex: The mall is on Banana Drive.
- **in**: designate the names of land area (towns, counties, states, countries, etc.). Ex: The best mall is **in** Orlando.

To is a preposition when it expresses movement.

*For example: We went **to** the mall yesterday.

To is not a preposition when it is part of an infinitive (to + simple form of the verb).

*For example: I want **to eat** lunch at the mall. (**to eat** is an infinitive, so **to** is not a preposition.)

¹ Drawn from "Prepositions: Locators in Time and Place." *The Guide to Grammar and Writing*. Capital Community College Foundation, 2004. Web.

Mastering Prepositions¹

In, on, & at

I live in Florida. I was born in Antarctica. I work in Orlando. My brother is in space. My cabin is in the mountains.	<i>In: surrounded by something, contained by something.</i>
There is dust on the tv screen. We flew to Hawaii on a jet.	<i>On: touching, supported by, hanging from, connected with, on top of.</i>
I live at 1234 Alafaya Trail. I shop at Walmart. I always eat at Macdonald's. We live at the end of the road.	<i>At: used to indicate a point in space, the location of someone/something.</i>

To

I went to the mall today. The player threw the ball to her teammate.	<i>To: in the direction of and reaching, as far as.</i>
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To is not always a preposition

*To is not a preposition when it is part of the infinitive. The infinitive is: **to** + the simple form of the verb. The simple form of the verb is a verb without **-s**, **-ed**, or **-ing** endings, e.g., walk, study, want. The infinitives of these words are: to walk, to study, to want.*

I tried to climb the tree. The bird began to sing.
I want to eat. We like to go shopping. The children have to sleep at night. Everyone needs to breathe.

Into

We put the groceries into the bag. The snake crawled into the closet.	<i>Into: to the inside of</i>
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¹ Drawn from Gloria Wahlen's *Prepositions Illustrated*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1995.