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12.0 OBJECTIVES

Learning Prepositions enables the learner to understand the language in a better manner. The following are the objectives of learning prepositions.

Students will be able to:

- identify prepositions.
- define prepositions and will be able to understand the significance of learning the topic.
- recognize and utilize the prepositional phrases.
- distinguish between the preposition of time and place.
- use prepositions correctly and efficiently in real context when they need to use in their day today conversations.

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Preposition is a very important part of speech in English language. Without prepositions sentences cannot be complete and comprehensible. In general terms they describe and add to the verb and often function as a part of adverb. (foreg. He drove towards home in full speed.) Prepositions show direction, time and place. All prepositions have objects. Generally prepositions are followed by objects. Object of a preposition can be a word or a phrase it relates to. A preposition and its objects together are called prepositional phrase. For example, “look for”, “look into” or “look after”- English language has number of prepositional phrases which make the language interesting. The preposition behind the verb changes the meaning. So, let us learn prepositions first.

12.2 DEFINITION OF PREPOSITION

It is described as “a word governing, and usually preceding, a noun or pronoun or adjective and expressing a relation to another word or element in the clause,” as in ‘the man on the platform’, ‘she arrived after dinner’, ‘what did you do it for?’

Merriam Webster defines it as, “a function word that typically combines with

a noun phrase to form a phrase which usually expresses a modification or predication”

It is also defined by Dictionary.com as “any member of a class of words found in many languages that are used before nouns, pronouns, or other substantives to form phrases functioning as modifiers of verbs, nouns, or adjectives, and that typically express a spatial, temporal, or other relationship, as in, on, by, to, since, etc.”

12.3 WHAT ARE PREPOSITIONS EXACTLY ?

Prepositions are words that show the relationship between other words in the sentence. They come before nouns and pronouns and sometimes, (rarely) before other words like adjectives and verbs. They do not change their form with gender or case differences as do other words. Let us take a few self-explanatory examples.

Example: What are you doing **after** school today? (time)

Example: What did you do that **for**? (why did you do that?)

Example: I grew up **beside** that famous international school. (place, right next door)

As it can be seen from the examples above, there are prepositions of place, time and reason.. There are also prepositions of position, movement, ways and means, directions, group relationships and comparisons to name a few.

Prepositions can be classified largely on the basis of time and place. Some other prepositions are also important to learn which can make your communication clear and precise. Prepositions are short words (on, in, to) that usually stand in front of nouns (sometimes also in front of gerund verbs). Even advanced learners of English find prepositions difficult, as exact translation or other word is usually not available in any Indian language. One preposition in your native language might have several translations depending on the situation. There are hardly any rules as to when to use which particular preposition. The only way to learn prepositions is looking them up in a dictionary, reading a lot many stories in English literature. Literature always helps learning useful phrases which take prepositions after them and hence they are called prepositional phrases. Let us have a look at the table which will make it quite clear how prepositions are used in various situations.

Prepositions in relation to Time:

Preposition Explanation Example

on	days of the week	on Monday
in	months / seasons time of day year after a certain period of time (<i>when?</i>)	in August / in winter in the morning in 2006 in an hour
at	for <i>night</i> for <i>weekend</i> a certain point of time (<i>when?</i>)	at night at the weekend at half past nine
since	from a certain point of time (past till now)	since 1980
for	over a certain period of time (past till now)	for 2 years
ago	a certain time in the past	2 years ago
before	earlier than a certain point of time	before 2004
to	telling the time	ten to six (5:50)
past	telling the time	ten past six (6:10)
to / till / until	marking the beginning and end of a period of time	from Monday to/till Friday
till / until	in the sense of <i>how long something is going to last</i>	He is on holiday until Friday.
by	in the sense of <i>at the latest</i> up to a certain time	I will be back by 6 o'clock. By 11 o'clock, I had read five pages.

Prepositions in relation to Place (Position and Direction)

Preposition	Explanation	Example
in	room, building, street, town, country book, paper etc. car, taxi picture, world	in the kitchen, in London in the book in the car, in a taxi in the picture, in the world
at	meaning <i>next to, by an object</i> for <i>table</i> for events place where you are to do something typical (watch a film, study, work)	at the door, at the station at the table at a concert, at the party at the cinema, at school, at work at the railway station/ hotel
on	attached for a place with a river being on a surface for a certain side (left, right) for a floor in a house for public transport for <i>television, radio</i>	the picture on the wall London lies on the Thames. on the table on the left on the first floor on the bus, on a plane on TV, on the radio
by, next to, beside	left or right of somebody or something	Jane is standing by / next to / beside the car.
under	on the ground, lower than (or covered by) something else	the bag is under the table
below	lower than something else but above ground	the fish are below the surface
over	covered by something else meaning <i>more than</i> getting to the other side (also <i>across</i>) overcoming an obstacle	put a jacket over your shirt over 16 years of age walk over the bridge climb over the wall a fan over our head
above	higher than something else, but not directly over it	a path above the lake a picture above the window
across	getting to the other side (also <i>over</i>) getting to the other side	walk across the bridge/forest/dessert swim across the lake/river
through	something with limits on top, bottom and the sides	drive through the tunnel
to	movement to person or building movement to a place or country for <i>bed</i>	go to the cinema go to London / Ireland go to bed/ go to the office
into	enter a room / a building	go into the kitchen / the house jump into the flushing water
towards	movement in the direction of something (but not directly to it)	go 5 steps towards the house
▪ onto	movement to the top of something	jump onto the table
▪ from	in the sense of <i>where from</i>	a flower from the garden a student from rural area

Other important Prepositions

Preposition	Explanation	Example
from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used to show the origin of something or someone used to show the material of which something is made used to show a change in the state of someone or something 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Where are you from?" "I'm from India." The desk is made from pine. Things went from bad to worse.
of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used to show possession, belonging or origin used after words or phrases expressing amount, number or particular unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a friend of mine a dozen of apples
by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used to show the person or thing that does something: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm reading some short stories (written) by Rabindranath Tagore.
on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used for showing some methods of travelling entering a public transport vehicle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It'd be quicker to get there on foot / on horse get on the train She boarded on flight.
in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> entering a car / Taxi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She got in the car and drove fast.
off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> leaving a public transport vehicle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She got off the bus.
out of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> leaving a closed vehicle, building... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She got out of the car She went out of the Hall/ office/classroom.
by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used to show measurements or amounts travelling (other than walking or horse riding) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Their wages were increased by 12%. She went by car, by bus, by train, by air
at	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In theory, women can still have children at the age of 50. At the age of 80, she is still young.
about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> on the subject of; connected with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What's that book about?

12.4 KEY WORDS

- 1) Object: Any preposition has an object either before or after it. (Generally Noun or Pronoun are object to the preposition) For example, "I wanted to share an idea with you."
- 2) Prepositional Phrase: A phrase (a group of words) containing a preposition at the end and change the meaning of the verb is called a prepositional phrase. English language has numerous such phrases which enrich and enhance the meanings in sentence. For example, the verb

‘ask’ takes a preposition ‘for’ behind it, it changes the meaning which is ‘to demand’. There are plenty of examples of prepositional phrases, such as, ‘look for’, ‘look after’, ‘look into’ etc.

- 3) Directional words: Prepositions are called directional words as they show directions and relations of words in the sentence.
- 4) Noun: a word used to name any of a class or thing or a person. The types of nouns are- Common Nouns, Abstract Nouns, Proper Nouns, Agent Nouns, etc.
- 5) Pronouns: A word used in a place of noun. Types of pronouns are- Demonstrative Pronoun, Personal pronoun, Interrogative Pronoun, Possessive pronoun, Relative pronoun etc. Pronouns are also object to prepositions. For example, “Can you lend your pen to me?” Here preposition is place before the pronoun.

12.5 EXERCISES WITH ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

HERE ARE SOME EASY EXAMPLES FOR THE BEGINNERS WHICH WILL HELP THEM UNDERSTAND HOW PREPOSITIONS ARE FREQUENTLY USED IN DAY TO DAY COMMUNICATION. THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES CAN SHOW THE PLACE OF PREPOSITIONS. THE BOLD OPTION INDICATES THE CORRECT ANSWER IN THE BRACKET.

1. This material is different that. (**from**/ to / with)
2. You should explain this them. (**to** / at / with)
3. He has been absent Monday. (**since**/for / from)
4. I haven’t been to the theatre a long time. (since / **for** /from)
5. He goes school by car. (**to** / at / on)
6. This is a comfortable house to live (on / at / **in**)
7. They are called different names. (**by**/ with / for)
8. We should not spend money luxuries. (for / **on** / with)
9. I gave him a chair to sit (**on** / at / in)
10. The new term begins June 1st. (on / in / **from**)
11. He poured the teathe mug. (**into** / on / in)
12. He said that he was very pleased my work. (**with** / on / at)

It is important to notice the difference in the usage of ‘since’ and ‘for’. Although both the prepositions are used in reference of time, they cannot be used abruptly. ‘Since’ is used always when the time is mentioned by a particular day, month or the year. (for example, Since January, or since 1984, or since 8am.etc.) ‘For’ is used when no specific point of time is mentioned. (for example, for one month, for two weeks or for ten years.)

The beginner requires to make a practice of learning prepositions through easy and simple sentences which make the context clear. So we provide an extensive practice to the learners of English.

12.6 ASSIGNMENTS

Check Your Progress : 2

A. FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH APPROPRIATE PREPOSITIONS.

- 1) Sheela paid ___ hotel rooms ___ advance, as she had booked the rooms online.
- 2) The professor went to the wrong classroom ___ mistake.
- 3) Please make sure that you are ___ time for the Rajdhani train.
- 4) I was looking ___ my book and ___ chance I saw a hundred rupee note ___ my table.
- 5) The bike rider suddenly stopped the bike and got _____ to collect his glove that had fallen ___ the road.
- 6) I love eating ___ Ahmedabad streets.
- 7) Youngsters prefer fast food, ___ instance Pizza and Sandwiches.
- 8) We saw the cat running _____ the terrace.
- 9) As I picked up my laptop, ___ my surprise, it fell _____ in my hand.
- 10) Isha has a lot ___ common with her friend.
- 11) If the baby starts crying, pick her up ___ once.
- 12) Did you forget your wallet _____ purpose, so you wouldn't have to pay?
- 13) People go to Ambaji ___ foot before "BhadrapadiPoornima".
- 14) What do a whale and a dolphin have ___ common?
- 15) Now people prefer party plots _____ banquets for wedding purpose.
- 16) I would take coffee instead ___ tea today.
- 17) He added jiggery instead ___ sugar in the pudding to make it healthier.
- 18) What do you prefer to do ___ the weekends?
- 19) The books were ___ a high shelf. They are _____ reach of children.
- 20) I wish to go to Mahabaleshwer ___ a change.
- 21) Please inform us ___ advance, if you are not joining us for the picnic.
- 22) She often goes to her Office ___ foot as it is very close.
- 23) Do you always wash your hand ___ a soap _____ your meal _____ fail?
- 24) The kid broke the toy and threw it _____ from the window.
- 25) Shreya worked very hard for CAFinals. ___ last, she could clear it.
- 26) Poorva should reach home ___ time or her grandmother would start worrying _____ her.
- 27) For poor people, owning a house was _____ reach but now with Government Affordable Housing scheme, they can buy it.
- 28) She was roaming _____ in the garden and ___ chance she met an old friend.
- 29) Udayan was _____ danger in a high tide sea, but soon a lifeguard saw him.
- 30) Parag drinks a liter of water every morning _____ fail. He is very health conscious.

B. PREPOSITIONS AFTER VERBS

Some verbs take a preposition before the object. These prepositions are called dependent prepositions. They are usually followed by a noun or an 'ing' form. There are several such verb+ preposition combinations which are necessary to know if the student wants to master the language.

Here are some illustrations.

Check Your Progress: 3

FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH APPROPRIATE PREPOSITIONS.

1. We faced some problems when we checked ____ the hotel.
2. He did not allow us to check ____ after lunch. He said their check out time is 10 am in their hotel.
3. My friend's father passed ____ last week.
4. When Lata went to Delhi last week, I reached the airport to see her ____.
5. The butterfly flew ____ as I approached it.
6. Before the plane took ____, the airhostess instructed to fasten __ the belts.
7. We take ____ our shoes as we enter our house.
8. The police chased the robber ____ the forest.
9. We are looking ____ a sea facing apartment.
10. When Anil's cheque was dishonoured, he wrote a letter to the manager to look ____ the matter.
11. The lawyer advised us to go ____ the papers before we sign it.
12. Positive media can help bring ____ the change in society.
13. My mother told me to look ____ my younger brother when she was going out.
14. Please turn ____ all the switches before you leave your home.
15. When you are not satisfied with the work done, speak it ____ to your colleagues.
16. Take care ____ yourself.
17. Gunjan looks ____ his younger brother as his mother is working
18. Milan goes ____ every detail of expenses before he writes accounts.
19. Gautam has never associated himself ____ any political party.
20. Mr. Rane made serious charges ____ his boss.

Check your progress: 4

1.5 C. Prepositions after Adjectives/ Nouns:

- 1) India is famous ____ her diversity.
- 2) Indians are proud ____ their traditions.
- 3) I am proud ____ my grandfather. He is an octogenarian but still very active.
- 4) Alap is not really interested ____ getting married.
- 5) Abhay is very much pleased ____ his exam results.

- 6) Maya is very angry ___ her servant as she did not turn up for work.
- 7) Hemang is very anxious ___ his son's arrival.
- 8) Sheela is very excited ___ the Kite Festival in Ahmedabad.
- 9) Mamata is very different ___ her sister ___ nature.
- 10) Punit is afraid ___ street dogs.
- 11) She is interested ___ Jazz music and her husband has a liking ___ classical music.
- 12) My brother has a bike that is similar ___ yours.
- 13) Kamal is very excited ___ buying a new car.
- 14) The teacher was pleased ___ his correct answer.
- 15) The engineer has drawn this graph ___ great precision.
- 16) They were tense because of the breach ___ agreement ___ their partner.
- 17) You will always succeed if you have done your part ___ good intentions.
- 18) Lata is extremely good ___ all European languages.
- 19) Sanjeev is very good ___ painting.
- 20) Pavan is not afraid ___ anything.

Do it Yourself

Exercise:

Fill in the blanks using proper Prepositions of Time/ Place:

- 1) Shyama is arriving ___ February ___ 13th early ___ the morning.
- 2) The weather is terrible ___ January ___ Kandala.
- 3) It is better to hire Uber ___ night if you are alone.
- 4) Purva is getting married ___ 26th May. It will be very hot ___ May.
- 5) They usually go ___ Calcotta ___ the summer ___ their daughters place.
- 6) People lived very simple life ___ 19th century.
- 7) Bhuvan graduated from University ___ 2010.
- 8) We usually go ___ our parents' house ___ Diwali and we take dinner ___ the terrace.
- 9) We generally go ___ a picnic ___ Sunday ___ the morning.
- 10) We take our lunch ___ the tree ___ 3 pm.
- 11) We met in the restaurant ___ 8pm. My friend was waiting ___ me ___ the lounge.
- 12) I like to take tea ___ the morning and Coffee ___ night.
- 13) We arranged my birthday party ___ the seventh floor ___ the building which is close ___ the hospital.
- 14) The Lilavati hospital is ___ front ___ the railway station.
- 15) Mr. Jadhav is imprisoned ___ more than a year ___ no valid reason.
- 16) Omkar picked ___ a bus from the terminus and left it ___ catch a train ___ the nearby railway station.
- 17) I take care ___ my son. My son is similar ___ me. He's quite different ___ my wife.

- 18) India is going _____ participate _____ the global economic forum.
- 19) My husband spent the milk money _____ cigarettes.
- 20) There has been a slight decrease _____ gas prices lately.
- 21) The Central Government has provided free gas cylinders ___ the BPL card holders.
- 22) He does not understand the difference _____ CNG and PNG.
- 23) In the beginning, Udayan was not accustomed _____ working in such a big company.
- 24) My favorite Indian philosopher is AdiShankaracharya. Most Westerners have never heard _____ him.
- 25) John's wife accused him _____ cheating. She thinks he is bored _____ her.
- 26) My boss told me to finish the report _____ 5 pm. After that, I could go _____ vacation.
- 27) Kate apologized _____ her son's poor behavior.
- 28) If you've got a problem, then do something _____ it!
- 29) Everyone _____ the HR department was surprised _____ the news.
- 30) Paul is very good _____ telling jokes. He reminds me _____ his father.
- 31) I'm not familiar _____ this neighborhood.
- 32) If I had to choose _____ going to heaven or hell, I'd choose heaven.
- 33) Hosni Mubarak was _____ power in Egypt for 30 years.
- 34) Alap is a fan _____ Manchester United.
- 35) NOTA stands _____ the Not Anyof the Above.
- 36) ___s company specializes _____ the management of young musicians.
- 37) I will go _____ vacation next month.
- 38) The couple ordered soup - one _____ two.
- 39) Vadodara is not bigger _____ Surat.
- 40) Krishna has to finish the project _____ 4 pm tonight.
- 41) ISCON is spreading Krishna consciousness _____ the world.
- 42) The movie was inspired _____ a book written 50 years ago.
- 43) I was able to return the product because it was still _____ warranty.
- 44) The little boy hit his friend _____ a stick.
- 45) I plan to work _____ I am 65 years old.
- 46) I wasnot able to focus _____ my work because of the loud construction work outside my window.
- 47) Fortunately, I getmany opportunities to go ___ long business trips ___ India.
- 48) This commercial was designed to appeal young women ___ their twenties and thirties.
- 49) I don't know the reason _____ ending the relationship.

- 50) As Mr. Swami had graduated _____ Harvard ____ a degree in political science, he writes articles ___ newspapers ____ politics.
- 51) I am very proud _____ my son's accomplishments.
- 52) Laura can't concentrate _____ her job because she is stressed _____ her marriage.
- 53) I don't care _____ baseball. I never watch it.
- 54) I am allergic _____ spicy food.
- 55) We are looking for someone who is skilled _____ giving presentations.
- 56) He is responsible _____ our branch in Singapore. He looks _____ everything there.
- 57) I have a question to ask related _____ your profession.
- 58) You can have a view _____ sea _____ my apartment.
- 59) The company executive didn't want to comment _____ that scandal.
- 60) You reminded me _____ my old college days.
- 61) After graduation, Joan will apply _____ some local companies _____ a job as a graphic designer.
- 62) There was much damage _____ the car.
- 63) These boots were _____ sale last week.
- 64) The United Nations has supplied the rebels _____ weapons.
- 65) I have too many problems to deal _____.
- 66) This product should appeal _____ girls in their teens.
- 67) I've never heard _____ Lyle Whitfield.
- 68) I was surprised _____ the size of her nose.
- 69) Grace is _____ her forties. She spends all her money _____ luxury goods.
- 70) Greg is involved _____ organized crime.
- 71) _____ the time, the terrorist could understand the plan, the Indian Regiment rushed _____ their abode and shot them.
- 72) There's always a risk _____ an earthquake in Japan. It's difficult to concentrate _____ your work, when you know there could be a disaster any minute.
- 73) Tina studied _____ Charles University for one year, but she graduated _____ Harvard. She is snobby. She looks _____ on people who haven't graduated college.
- 74) I need to take care _____ my little brother. He is discriminated _____ school because he has red hair. Yesterday, a bully punched him. However, my brother didn't tell _____ the bully.
- 75) The doctor elaborated _____ the patient's condition. It turns out that the rash was actually brought _____ food he ate while his stay in Malaysia.

On the basis of whatever you have learnt earlier in this chapter, you can take up this exercise which will help you master this topic.

12.7 BOOKS SUGGESTED AND E-RESOURCES:

Eastwood, John. *Oxford Practice Grammar Intermediate*. Oxford UP, 2014.

<https://www.instructorweb.com>

<https://www.lessonscorner.com>

<https://www.lessonsnips.com>

Lester, Mark & Larry Beason. *Handbook of English Grammar and Usage*. The McGraw-Hill, 2005.

Murphy, Raymond. *English Grammar in Use*. Cambridge UP, 2001.

Yule, George. *Oxford Practice Grammar Advanced*. Oxford UP, 2006.

Answers**Check Your Progress: 2**

1- up- in/ 2 by /3 in /4 by, on/ 5 down, on, /6 out on, /7 for / 8 towards //9 to, apart 10 in /11 at /12 with / 13 on /14 in /15 to /16 of /17 of /18 on /19 out of //20 for/ 21 in /22 on/ 23 before, without / 24 away / 25 at/ 26 in, about/ 27 out of/ 28 under/ 29 around, by / 30 without.

Check Your Progress: 3

1-In/ 2- out/ 3- away/ 4-off/ 5-away/ 6- off, up/ 7- off/ 8- throughout/ 9- for/ into/ 11 – through/ 12- out/ 13- after/ 14- off/ 15- out./16-of/17-after/ 18-through/ 19-with/ 20-against

Check Your Progress: 4

1-for/ 2- of/ 3-of/ 4- in/ 5- with/ 6- with/ 7- about/ 8-about/ 9-from-by/ 10- of/11-in-for/ 12- to 13- about/ 14- with/ 15- with/ 16-in-with/ 17- with/ 18-at/ 19-at/ 20-of