Prepositions for kids: a list of 50, with examples and a chart

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A list of 50 prepositions for kids sorted by where, when and how, with example sentences, a chart to copy for the wall and free practice pages.

A preposition is a word that shows where or when something is, such as in, on, under, before and after, and it is always followed by a noun or a pronoun. The small word and the noun after it make a prepositional phrase: "under the bed", "after lunch". Peabody's prepositions page has a definition, examples and three questions with answers, free through the end of 2026, with no sign-up and no ads.

Below are 50 prepositions in three tables, a wall chart a teacher can draw in two minutes, and three games that need no screen.

The list of 50

Where

- Preposition: in · In a sentence: The milk is in the fridge.
- Preposition: on · In a sentence: The book is on the shelf.
- Preposition: under · In a sentence: The cat hid under the bed.
- Preposition: over · In a sentence: The bird flew over the house.
- Preposition: above · In a sentence: A lamp hangs above the table.
- Preposition: below · In a sentence: The fish swam below the boat.
- Preposition: behind · In a sentence: The ball rolled behind the couch.
- Preposition: beside · In a sentence: Sit beside me.
- Preposition: between · In a sentence: The pond is between two trees.
- Preposition: near · In a sentence: We live near the park.
- Preposition: next to · In a sentence: The shoes are next to the door.
- Preposition: inside · In a sentence: The toys are inside the box.
- Preposition: outside · In a sentence: The dog waits outside the shop.
- Preposition: through · In a sentence: We walked through the gate.
- Preposition: across · In a sentence: The frog jumped across the log.
- Preposition: around · In a sentence: We ran around the yard.
- Preposition: along · In a sentence: The ducks swam along the bank.
- Preposition: into · In a sentence: She put the card into the envelope.
- Preposition: onto · In a sentence: The cat jumped onto the sofa.
- Preposition: off · In a sentence: The cup fell off the table.

- Preposition: up · In a sentence: We climbed up the hill.
- Preposition: down · In a sentence: The sled slid down the slope.
- Preposition: toward · In a sentence: He walked toward the gate.
- Preposition: past · In a sentence: The bus drove past our house.
- Preposition: among · In a sentence: The mouse hid among the leaves.
- Preposition: against · In a sentence: The ladder leans against the wall.
- Preposition: beyond · In a sentence: The farm is beyond the hill.
- Preposition: in front of · In a sentence: The bike is in front of the garage.

When

- Preposition: before · In a sentence: Wash your hands before lunch.
- Preposition: after · In a sentence: We play after school.
- Preposition: during · In a sentence: It rained during the game.
- Preposition: until · In a sentence: Wait until noon.
- Preposition: since · In a sentence: I have lived here since 2020.
- Preposition: at · In a sentence: The show starts at six.
- Preposition: by · In a sentence: Finish your work by Friday.
- Preposition: from · In a sentence: The shop is open from nine to five.
- Preposition: to · In a sentence: We read from one to two.
- Preposition: within · In a sentence: Call me within an hour.

Other jobs

- Preposition: with · In a sentence: I painted with a brush.
- Preposition: without · In a sentence: Never swim without a grown-up.
- Preposition: for · In a sentence: This gift is for you.
- Preposition: of · In a sentence: She drank a glass of milk.
- Preposition: about · In a sentence: We read a book about sharks.
- Preposition: like · In a sentence: He runs like the wind.
- Preposition: except · In a sentence: Everyone came except Sam.
- Preposition: as · In a sentence: She works as a nurse.
- Preposition: per · In a sentence: The shop sells eggs at two dollars per dozen.
- Preposition: despite · In a sentence: We played despite the rain.
- Preposition: instead of · In a sentence: Have an apple instead of a cookie.
- Preposition: because of · In a sentence: The game stopped because of the storm.

That makes 28 for where, 10 for when and 12 for other jobs, 50 in all. A few of them, such as "before" and "after", can also be conjunctions, and the sentence decides which job they do.

A chart to copy

Draw a box and a ball on a poster. Move the ball to eight places, and write the word that describes each one.

- Position of the ball: The ball is in the box · Preposition: in
- Position of the ball: The ball is on the box · Preposition: on
- Position of the ball: The ball is under the box · Preposition: under
- Position of the ball: The ball is beside the box · Preposition: beside
- Position of the ball: The ball is behind the box · Preposition: behind
- Position of the ball: The ball is in front of the box · Preposition: in front of
- Position of the ball: The ball is above the box · Preposition: above
- Position of the ball: The ball is between two boxes · Preposition: between

Children like to add their own: a drawing of a cat in place of the ball makes it funnier and they remember it better.

Prepositional phrases

A preposition never works alone. It starts a phrase and the phrase ends with a noun or a pronoun. Here the phrase is in bold.

- Sentence: The bird sat on the fence. · Preposition: on · Phrase: on the fence
- Sentence: We went to the park. · Preposition: to · Phrase: to the park
- Sentence: She hid behind the tree. · Preposition: behind · Phrase: behind the tree
- Sentence: He left after lunch. · Preposition: after · Phrase: after lunch
- Sentence: The cake is for you. · Preposition: for · Phrase: for you

A quick test: if you can put "the box" or "it" after the word and it makes sense, it is probably a preposition.

When it is taught

Children use their first prepositions in kindergarten (L.K.1e), learn more in 1st grade (L.1.1i), and in 4th grade the standards ask them to form and use prepositional phrases (L.4.1e). The prepositions page has the definition, three examples and three questions to try. The parts of speech post shows where prepositions sit among the eight jobs words do.

Three quick games with no screen

1. Hide the toy. Hide a small toy and give clues, each with one preposition: "It is under something soft." The child guesses where.
2. Simon says, places only. "Simon says stand behind your chair. Simon says put your hand on your head." The child has to listen for the little word.
3. Count them in a story. Read one page of a story from the library and count the prepositions. Then find one prepositional phrase and say what it tells you.

Peabody does not have a prepositions game. It has a page for the skill, flashcards linked from the page, and the grammar hub.

Questions grown-ups ask

What is a preposition for kids?

A word that shows where or when something is, like in, on or after. It sits in front of a noun and tells how that noun relates to the rest of the sentence.

How many prepositions are there in English?

About 150, counting the ones made of more than one word, but most writing uses a few dozen. The list above has the 50 children meet most.

Is "to" always a preposition?

No. In "We went to the park", to is a preposition. In "I want to run", to marks the verb and is not a preposition.

Can a sentence end with a preposition?

Yes, in everyday English. "Who are you talking to?" is natural. In very formal writing, some teachers prefer "To whom are you talking?"

Free at peabody.kids/blog/prepositions-for-kids-list-and-examples