Prepositions

Before you start

1 Read the information in the article. Look at the highlighted grammar examples.

2 Now read the sentences. Choose the correct words in italics. The highlighted grammar examples will help you.

1 Our closest theatre festival takes place on / at / in Burnham.
2 Sometimes you can’t get close / near / by the stage.
3 Some actors don’t like to play opposite / behind / in front of a big crowd.
4 A lot of people go at / in / to the Burnham Theatre festival.
5 The Burnham Theatre Festival starts in / on / at August.
6 Most summer festivals here are from July up / in / to September.
7 We try to see a play at the festival in every / on every / every week.
8 Festivals don’t usually take place while / during / from the winter.
9 Most people travel to the festival in / with / by car or train.
10 Tickets are usually to sale / by sale / for sale two months before the start.

3 Check your answers below. Then go to the unit for more information and practice.

1 in 2 near 3 in front of 4 to 5 in 6 to 7 every 8 during 9 by 10 for sale

Go online for a full diagnostic test
18 Prepositions of place (1)

1 Main uses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>at</th>
<th>There’s someone at the door. She’s at her desk by 9.00 every day. Write your name at the top of the paper.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in</td>
<td>There are some books in the cupboard. There was no one in the house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on</td>
<td>The computer is on the desk. The poster is on the wall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above</td>
<td>There’s a poster on the wall above the desk. He lives in the flat above the shop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below</td>
<td>Adrian is standing below the clock. The coats are in the cupboard below the stairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under</td>
<td>The rubbish bin is under the desk. I keep my old school books under the bed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>next to</td>
<td>The cupboard is next to the desk. He lives in the house next to the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beside</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>near</td>
<td>Adrian is standing near the door. She works at the shop near the station.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Other uses

We use at with
- home and places of study/work:
  at home, at school, at university, at work, at the office
- other places in a town:
  at the doctor’s, at the cinema, at the station

We use in with
- towns and countries:
  in Milan, in Italy, in Europe

Practice

1 Match the two parts of the sentences.

0 There were some really good bands  A on the desk in my office.
1 Your coats and scarves are  B on the bedroom wall?
2 Who painted that lovely picture  C in the cupboard by the front door.
3 Can you put your old papers in the bin  D at her best friend’s wedding.
4 You’ll find the tickets  E under the sink?
5 At the moment Meral is living  F at the festival last year.
6 Louisa met her husband  G in Izmir, but she comes from Ankara.

2 GRAMMAR IN USE  Complete the conversation with the correct phrases from the box.
Beside the park  in the office block  in the park  near the festival  near the station  next to our house

A How are you getting to the festival on Saturday?
B I’m going by train. We live quite near the station – it’s only about a fifteen-minute walk.
A That’s too far with luggage!
B No, I’ll take a taxi to the station. The taxi office is next door.
A That’ll be expensive. Why don’t you drive here and we can go by bus? The bus stops just outside really.
B Does it stop then?
A Quite near, it’s only about a five-minute walk.
B But the station is. You can walk straight into the festival.
A Why don’t we just drive? There’s parking for the festival near to our house.
B That’s true! Let’s do that.

3 GRAMMAR IN USE  Look at the picture. Complete the text with prepositions.

Hi Melissa!
About Saturday – let’s meet at the station. You can’t miss it – there’s a huge clock on the wall at the front and there’s a car park near the station. I’ll meet you at the taxi stop just outside. There are some nice shops near the station and we can have lunch at the café. The cinema is right after lunch. Maggie can’t meet us for lunch so she’ll just meet us at the cinema at 2.30. See you then! Jackie

Go online for more practice
1 in front of, behind, opposite, between

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preposition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in front of</td>
<td>Joanne is in front of Simon. Annie sits in front of me in the class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behind</td>
<td>Simon is behind Joanne. There’s a police car behind our car.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opposite</td>
<td>The snack bar is opposite the ticket office. My house is opposite the post office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>Simon is between Joanne and Mariella. That’s me in the photo – between mum and dad.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

✗ The snack bar is opposite to the ticket office.
✓ The snack bar is opposite the ticket office.

2 Describing a picture

We use prepositions to describe where things are in a picture. Read this description of the picture at the top of the page.

The picture shows the entrance to a festival.
At the front we can see the ticket office. Three people are waiting for tickets. There’s a festival stage at the back.
The ticket office is on the left of the picture and the snacks are on the right.
In the centre there’s a group of people.
At the top we can see the sky and at the bottom we can see some children.
Practice

1 Look at the plan below. Then choose the correct words in *italics*.  

0 A is on the *right* / *left* of B.  
1 C is opposite / between B and E.  
2 D is in front of / behind E.  
3 F is opposite / between A and B.  
4 G is between / in front of H.  

2 **GRAMMAR IN USE** Now read the text. Write the correct places in the plan.

The biggest building in the shopping centre is the department store. It’s opposite the supermarket and a small hotel. The hotel is on the right of the supermarket. On the right of the hotel is a cinema, and opposite that is the café, which has a lot of tables and chairs in front of it. The café is on the left of the bus station, which is opposite the sports centre. That has a small area behind it with a tennis court.

3 **GRAMMAR IN USE** Look at the photo.

Complete the text with the correct words from the box.  

back front left right top

The picture shows a scene from Chinese New Year in London. At the (0) *front* we can see people holding models of a dragon and a bird. There are some old buildings and shops on the (1) ................. and (2) ................. of the picture. It is a nice day because we can see blue sky at the (3) ................. . Behind all the people, at the (4) ................. , there are more colourful things that are part of the festival.

4 Now look at a picture in the room you are in, or find a picture from this book. Write three sentences with prepositions to describe it.

At the front I can see ..........................................................  
......................................................................................  
......................................................................................

**Go online for more practice**
20 Prepositions of movement

From the ticket office, you go through the main gate and along the path. Go past the toilets and follow the path to the food court. Then go round the fountain and across the bridge. The main stage is in front of you.

1 along, past, across, over, through, round, from, to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preposition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>along</td>
<td>Walk along the path.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past</td>
<td>Go past the toilets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>across</td>
<td>Go across the bridge. Go over the bridge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over</td>
<td>Go over the bridge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>through</td>
<td>Go through the main gate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>round</td>
<td>Go round the fountain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from</td>
<td>You go from the ticket office ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to</td>
<td>Follow the path to the food court.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We also use from in this way:
Our English teacher comes/is from New Zealand. (= New Zealand is her country.)

2 into, out of, onto, off

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preposition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>into</td>
<td>Let’s go into the house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>out of</td>
<td>Can you get my shoes out of the wardrobe?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onto</td>
<td>The cat jumped onto the table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>off</td>
<td>The cat jumped off the table.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Into is similar to in, but we use into for movement.

in for position/place ➤ Unit 18
We get into/out of a car or taxi, but get on/off a bus, plane, train, ship, bike:
Get into the car. We’re ready to go. I felt ill when I got off the ship.

✗ I got into the bus. ✓ I got on the bus.
Practice

1. **GRAMMAR IN USE** Read these directions to an arts festival. Then choose the correct words in *italics*. [Listen and check.]

   **How to find us**

   If you are coming by train, follow these directions from the station to the Arts Centre: when you leave the station, go (0) across / through the railway bridge. (1) To / From the bridge, turn right and walk (2) along / past the path by the river for about 200 metres, then go (3) along / through the small park on your left. Go (4) across / round the statue in the middle and (5) from / past the park café. Follow the path (6) to / along the main gate and go (7) across / through the gate. Go (8) along / across the main road and you’ll see the Arts Centre in front of you.

2. Complete the sentences with prepositions. [Listen and check.]

   0. You have to turn your lights on when you go ... through ... the tunnel.
   1. I always walk .......... the bridge to get to work. It’s quicker.
   2. ‘Is this Kew Gardens?’ ‘No. You need to get .......... the bus at the next stop.’
   3. The doors open at 6:00 p.m. and then people can go ............ the cinema.
   4. Turn right and go .......... the post office – it’s the next building on the right.
   5. Walk .......... the lake. The café is on the other side.

3. **GRAMMAR IN USE** Complete the description below with prepositions. Use the map to help you.

   The parade starts at 10:30. We go (0) ... out of ... the station car park and walk (1) .................. the path by the river, and then go (2) .................. the tunnel under the railway into the town centre. We walk (3) .................. the hospital (4) .................. Main Street (closed to traffic for the day). We go (5) .................. the street and then (6) .................. the main square to the statue – we divide into two groups to go (7) .................. the statue, and finally, we walk up the steps and (8) .................. the stage at the other side of the square.

4. Describe your route to school/work every day.

   *I always walk to work. I go out of my apartment and turn left. I walk along the street .......... past some shops ...*
21 Prepositions of time (1)

1 at, in, on

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>at</td>
<td>an exact time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The train arrives at 6.00. The film starts at 9.00.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>special days or occasions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lucy met an old friend at her sister’s wedding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>times of meals and the weekend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The concert is at lunchtime.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What are you doing at the weekend?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in</td>
<td>parts of the day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There are events in the evening every day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It gets cooler in the afternoon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>months, seasons, years, centuries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The festival is in May.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He was born in 1994.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They built the castle in the eleventh century.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on</td>
<td>dates and days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The festival starts on 5 May.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My interview is on Thursday afternoon.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⚠️ We say at night, NOT in the night:
✗ The supermarket is open in the night. ✓ The supermarket is open at night.

2 No preposition

- We don’t use a preposition with
  - this (morning, week, etc.): What time did you have breakfast this morning?
  - last (month, year, etc.): The new theatre opened last month.
  - next (week, year, etc.): My English course starts next week.
  - every (day, weekend, etc.): There are special events every day.

⚠️ Kevin’s exam was on last Tuesday. ✓ Kevin’s exam was last Tuesday.
✗ There’s a festival here in every February. ✓ There’s a festival here every February.

3 in, until, from ... to/until

- My birthday is in five days. (five days from now)
- The festival continues until 12 May. (it ends on this date)
- The festival lasts from 9 May to/until 12 May. (from the beginning to the end of this time)

Use of prepositions in American English ➤ page 317
Practice

1 Match the two parts of the sentences. Listen and check.

0 The first men walked on the moon in A 9 June, 1963.
1 Americans usually have family parties in B Saturdays.
2 World War Two lasted from C the morning.
3 People usually do their best work in D 1969.
4 Johnny Depp was born on E November.
5 Children don’t usually go to school on F 1939 until 1945.

2 Look at the notices. Complete the sentences below them. Use the correct prepositions.

0 Knightley Manor is only open to the public at the weekend...
1 The train to Winchester arrives and leaves.
2 The shop is closed.
3 The next term starts.
4 The cinema tickets are half price.
5 The next performance of the play will be.

3 Complete/write the second sentence so it means the same as the first. Use the words in brackets ().

0 I usually go to the gym at 10.00. (in) I usually go to the gym in the morning.
1 I went to the gym at 10.30 today. (this) I went...
2 It’s Monday 15 June now. I have a doctor’s appointment for Monday 22 June. (next) I’m going...
3 At the moment I’m working from Monday to Sunday. (every)...
4 It’s Monday. The report will be ready on Thursday. (in)...
5 The builders are starting on Wednesday and working until Saturday. (from ... to)...

4 Complete the sentences about you. Use the information in brackets ().

0 (year) I was born...
1 (year) I was born.
2 (day, month) My birthday is.
3 (time) I usually get up and go to bed.
4 (period) I usually work / study from.
5 (day) I often take exercise / play a sport.

Go online for more practice and a progress test
22 Prepositions of time (2)

1 before, after
We use before and after with
• times:
  Let’s meet before 7.00. The film starts then.
  Train tickets are cheaper after 9.30 in the morning.
• events/situations:
  There will be drinks before the film. Let’s watch TV after dinner.
  My grandmother was born before the war. I can meet you after work.

before and after + -ing form ➤ Unit 95.1

2 by, for, during
We use by to mean ‘not later than’:
Please give me your homework by Friday. (on or before Friday)
The holiday will be cheaper if we book it by 30 April. (on or before 30 April)
The meeting is on Wednesday so I’ll finish the report by then.

We use for a period of time:
for an hour, two days, three weeks
It means ‘the whole time’:
We waited for the bus for an hour.

We use during + an event or situation:
during the flight, the winter, the war
Neil Brand plays the piano during the film.
Uncle Andy called us during supper with some bad news.

Compare during and for:
I only slept for half an hour during the flight.
It rained for two days during our holiday.

✗ I go to classes during three hours in the afternoon.
✓ I go to classes for three hours in the afternoon.

for with present perfect ➤ Unit 53.1
The Rocks Hotel

has welcomed visitors (0) for 25 years.

The following information will help you to have an enjoyable stay:

- The restaurant is open from 6.30 until 9.30 p.m. If you would like an evening meal this time, please call 135.
- Breakfast is served between 6.30 and 9.00 a.m. If you would like breakfast in your room, please hang the menu card on your door (2) by 2.00 a.m.
- Reception is closed from 11.30 p.m. to 6.00 a.m. If you need a doctor the night, please call 100.
- We ask guests to leave their rooms by 11.00 a.m. If you wish to keep your room later than this, please let us know (4) by 9.00 a.m.

**SPECIAL SPRING OFFER** (5) for the months of March and April, stay two nights and have dinner here, get the third night FREE!

** Go online for more practice **
23 Prepositions with other meanings

1 by
We use by to talk about
- a way of travelling:
  We went to Hay by bus.
  Dave goes to work by bike.
- a way of communicating:
  I keep in touch with all my friends by email.
- a way of paying for something:
  I pay for my shopping by credit card.
  (But we pay for something in cash or by cash.)

✗ Amanda goes to work by foot. ✓ Amanda goes to work on foot.

We also use by to say who wrote or produced something:
The ‘Young James Bond’ books are by Charlie Higson.
‘Guernica’ is a famous painting by Pablo Picasso.
The play ‘Macbeth’ was written by Shakespeare.

by with passive form of verb ➤ Unit 96.3

2 with
We use with to mean ‘together’:
I went to Hay with my two best friends.
My parents are on holiday with my brother at the moment.

We can also use with to say what we use to do something:
He pushed the door open with his foot.

3 as, like
We use as for a person’s job, or to say what something is used for:
Martin works as a waiter in the evenings.
You can use the side of a book as a ruler.

We use like when we mean ‘similar to’:
Debbie’s very beautiful – she looks like a model. (She isn’t a model.)
This tastes like chocolate. (It isn’t chocolate.)

✗ We don’t use like when we talk about someone’s job. We use as:
  ✗ Alex works like a builder. ✓ Alex works as a builder. (This is his job.)
Practice

1 Match the sentences 1–5 with the meanings A–F.

0 That picture is by Karen, when she was at college.
1 That picture is of Karen, when she was at college.
2 Karen usually goes to work on foot.
3 Karen catches the bus if she’s late.
4 Karen works as a photographer.
5 Karen looks like a photographer.

A She is a photographer.
B She walks to work.
C She is in the picture.
D She painted the picture.
E She isn’t a photographer.
F She sometimes goes to work by bus.

2 **GRAMMAR IN USE** Complete the conversation with the phrases A–H below.

**Listen and check.**

SUE Did you go to any festivals last year?

AMY Yes, we went to one – a film festival in Liverpool.

SUE Really? Did you go (0) .......... ?

AMY Yes. We went to a wonderful talk (1) .......... about Indian films.

SUE How did you go – (2) .......... ?

AMY No, we didn’t drive. We went (3) .......... . But it was quite expensive – we had to pay for the train fares (4) .......... .

SUE Mmm, but did you enjoy the festival?

AMY Yes, it was great – but Justin fell and hurt his foot and he had to walk (5) .......... for weeks afterwards!

SUE Oh, no! Is he OK now?

AMY Yes. He got a book (6) .......... with exercises in, and he did those. He’s fine now.

SUE Good. Oh, I nearly forgot. When is the Ely festival this year?

AMY Mmm, I’ve got the information at home. I’ll send it to you (7) .......... .

SUE Great. Thanks.

A by email C by car E by a famous fitness teacher G with a stick
B by train D by credit card F by an Indian film director H with Justin

3 Complete the sentences with as or like.

**Listen and check.**

0 Robert spent years .......... a carpenter before he became a teacher.

1 Your brother really looks .......... that footballer in Real Madrid.

2 Marina loves going to parties, .......... most girls of her age.

3 You can use this sofa .......... a bed. It’s really comfortable.

4 Mmm, your perfume smells .......... roses. It’s lovely.

5 The TV chef Gordon Ramsay trained .......... a footballer when he was young.

4 Change the sentences so they are true for you.

0 I pay for most things by cheque. .......... in cash

1 I look like my father.

2 I live with two other students.

3 I love music by Mozart.

4 I always go to work by car.
Common phrases with prepositions

1 Phrases of place

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHRASE</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>at home</td>
<td>I’m usually at home in the evenings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at school</td>
<td>The children are at school next week so we can’t come.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at work</td>
<td>Robert’s at work now – why don’t you call him there?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in bed</td>
<td>Teenagers often stay in bed till late.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on holiday</td>
<td>Where are you going on holiday this year?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on business</td>
<td>Melissa’s in Rome on business this week. (working there)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We don’t use to with home, here or there:
✗ I’m tired. I want to go to home now.
✓ I’m tired. I want to go home now.

2 Phrases of time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHRASE</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>at first</td>
<td>in the beginning after a long time immediately together</td>
<td>At first I was unhappy at college but now I really like it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at last</td>
<td>at the right time</td>
<td>At last it stopped raining so we went outside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at once</td>
<td></td>
<td>The ambulance arrived almost at once.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in hurry</td>
<td>have to do something quickly finally early enough for something</td>
<td>I can’t talk now. I’m in a hurry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the end</td>
<td></td>
<td>We solved the problem in the end, after a lot of work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in time</td>
<td></td>
<td>Make sure you get home in time for dinner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on time</td>
<td>at the right time</td>
<td>The plane left on time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In time means ‘early enough for something’:
I didn’t arrive at the station in time for the six o’clock train, so I had to wait for the next one.

On time means ‘at the correct time’:
Last year 92 percent of South-East trains left on time.

3 Other common phrases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHRASE</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>by</td>
<td>by chance</td>
<td>We found this wonderful restaurant by chance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>by mistake</td>
<td>I sent that email by mistake – I didn’t want you to read it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in</td>
<td>in love</td>
<td>My father says that he’s still in love with my mother after twenty-five years!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in public</td>
<td>I was very nervous the first time I spoke in public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in private</td>
<td>Can we discuss your work in private?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on</td>
<td>on fire</td>
<td>The motorway was closed because a car was on fire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on purpose</td>
<td>I didn’t get wet on purpose – I fell in the water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for</td>
<td>for sale</td>
<td>The house at the end of the road is for sale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>out of</td>
<td>out of order</td>
<td>The lift is out of order. We’ll have to use the stairs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Practice

1 Complete the sentences with prepositions.  

0 Which languages do you study at school in your country?  
1 Can I talk to you at private after the class?  
2 It’s dangerous to drive and talk on a mobile phone at the same time.  
3 I really like the handbag in the window. Is it on sale?  
4 The police found the money chance when they searched the apartment.  
5 Ahmed travels to Switzerland every month business.  
6 After nearly an hour, our bus arrived last!  

2 GRAMMAR IN USE Complete the story with the correct words and phrases from the box.  

at first at once home in a hurry in the end in time on fire  

We had a terrible experience a few weeks ago. One evening, a friend of ours had dinner with us, and we drove him to the station after our meal. We were quite late for his train so we left the house in a hurry, and I forgot to turn off the cooker. When we got in time from the station, the kitchen was on fire! We were shocked at once but then we called the fire service. They arrived almost in time, and put the fire out. We were lucky that they put the fire out to save our kitchen – there wasn’t much damage, so everything was OK.  

3 Write the sentences again. Replace the underlined words with a common phrase.  

0 I’m really sorry I took your coat – I didn’t do it deliberately.  

I’m really sorry I took your coat – I didn’t do it on purpose.  

1 The film seemed very boring in the beginning, but then it got better.  

2 I’m going to be in Prague for work next week.  

3 Please make sure that you arrive at the correct time for your appointment.  

4 If you hear the bell, go to your class immediately.  

5 The coffee machine isn’t working again.  

4 GRAMMAR IN USE There are five more mistakes with prepositions in the conversation. Find and correct them.  

Start by listening and checking.  

A Did you get tickets for Radiohead?  
B Yes, I did. I had to phone the box office about ten times but I got through on the end.  
A That’s great!  
B I’ve got tickets for Friday 15th – I’ll be on work that day, so I’ll go straight from the office to Wembley Stadium.  

A Well, I’m actually by holiday from work that day. I’ll meet you to there.  
B Can you meet me at 6.30? It starts at 8.00 and I want to be there by time – at least an hour before it starts.  
A Yes, that’s fine. I’ll drive and park nearby, then I can drive you to home afterwards.  
B Thanks. That’s great.  

Go online for more practice and a progress test.