

# Introduction to Prepositions

## In English, prepositions function:

- As a link between related words: The park is *between* 7<sup>th</sup> street and 10<sup>th</sup> street.
- As a means to illustrate specific circumstances: He poured water *from* the kettle *into* the cup.
- As locators, to put words in specific spaces or times: The moon is hanging low *in* the sky.
- As indicators of direction: We looked *at* the ocean, and then walked *along* the shore.
- As introducers of how something happens: We read news *on* the internet and also *in* newspapers.

## Prepositions can take several forms:

Single-word prepositions are connecting words, usually short, which show the connection between a noun or pronoun and another word in a sentence.

The airplane flew through the sky.

In the above sentence, the preposition *through* connects and relates sky (a noun) to the verb flew.

The nine most frequent single-word prepositions in English are (in alphabetical order):  
at, by, for, from, in, of, on, to, with

Phrasal Prepositions contain more than one word.

The boy ate candy instead of cake.

The phrasal preposition *instead of* creates a relationship between the two nouns candy and cake.

Some of the most common phrasal prepositions are (in alphabetical order):

according to, along with, apart from, because of, by way of, due to, except for, in addition to, in case of, in front of, in regard to, in place of, in spite of, instead of, next to, on account of, out of, up to

Co-occurring prepositions are prepositions that work in pairs.

I work from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The prepositional pair *from* and *to* can be used to show the range of time, distance or degree.

Prepositional verbs and adjectives are two-word verbs or adjectives that include a preposition. The preposition contributes to the meaning of the verb or adjective.

Examples of prepositional verbs are:

rely on  
substitute for  
part with

Examples of prepositional adjectives are:

afraid of  
interested in  
composed of