

Prepositions of position, movement and time

A Starting activities

1 Sorting them out

Prepositions of position, movement and time

- 1 Work as a class. Classify the words below into prepositions of position, movement and time. Some come into more than one category.

in, at, on, onto, into, along, during

When you have finished look at Activity note 61 on page 156.

- 2 Work as a class. Think of sentences:
- that include *in* as a preposition of position, movement and time (3 sentences),
 - that include *at* as a preposition of position and time (2 sentences),
 - that include *on* as a preposition of position, movement and time (3 sentences).

Example: *The wine is in the cellar.* (*in* for position)

2 The first person to build a house on the moon

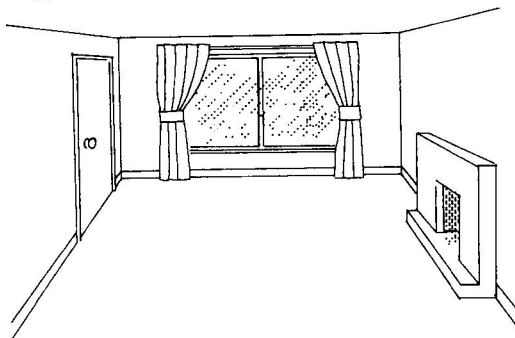
Prepositions of time

- 1 Work in pairs. Write a paragraph about the first person to build a house on the moon. Use these phrases to help you:
- s/he was born at . . . o'clock on the . . . of . . .
 - before starting . . .
 - after leaving . . .
 - until s/he was 19 s/he had never . . .
 - by the time s/he was 25 s/he had . . .
 - from . . . to . . . s/he was a . . .
 - for . . . years s/he . . . and during this time s/he . . .
 - in the winter of . . . s/he . . .
- 2 Work as a class. Read your paragraph to the class and listen to other people's paragraphs, writing down any uses of prepositions you did not know before.

3 After the party

Prepositions of position and movement

- 1 Work in pairs, A and B. Make a quick, large copy of this drawing of a family living room.



Discuss and agree on where all the furnishings listed below should go using the prepositions of position.

Example: *Let's put a picture above the fireplace.*

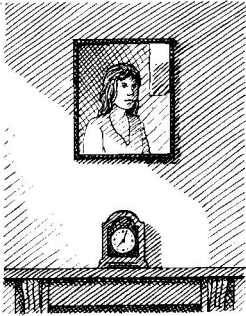
Furnishings: two armchairs, a small round table, a large square table, a sofa, a television set, a rug, pictures on the walls, a table lamp, a light, ashtrays, a poster, some books, a piano, a bookcase. (Put in anything else that you both want to.)

Prepositions of position: *above, behind, beside, between, in (in the middle, in this corner), in front of, near, on, on top of, under*

- 2 Now decide who is A and who is B. A is sixteen years old and B is A's mother or father. Last night A had a party for all his or her friends. The living room now looks quite different.
- Person A:** Read Activity note 36 on page 146.
Person B: Read Activity note 69 on page 159.

B Grammar guide

1 Prepositions of position



The picture is above (or over) the clock.

The clock is under the picture.

The car is in front of the lorry.

A suitcase is on top of the car.

The lorry is behind the car.

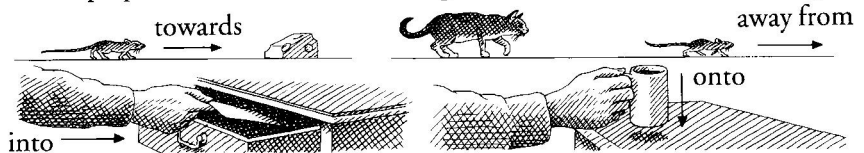
Jim is standing by (or beside) his car.



- *At* is used for location. (*at the top of the page, at the bus stop*)
- *On* is used when something is touching a surface (*on a noticeboard*). It is used in some position phrases (*on the right*), in some geographical expressions (*on the coast*) and in some 'parts of the body' expressions. (*He had a funny look on his face.*)
- *In* is used when someone or something is surrounded on all sides (*in the newspaper, in the street*). Note that with cities and countries we use *in* (*I live in Oxford.*) but with addresses we use *at* (*I live at 15 Royal Street.*)
- Other prepositions of position: *between, close to, near, next to* and *opposite*.

2 Prepositions of movement

- Use *into* and *onto* with movement verbs. (*He drove into the car park.*) But with some movement verbs we normally use *in* instead of *into* and *on* instead of *onto*. The most common of these are *drop, fall, jump, put* and *throw*.
- Most of the prepositions of position in 1 are also prepositions of movement. *She ran behind the tree. The plane flew over the city.*
- Other prepositions of movement: *along, across, around, round* and *through*.



3 Prepositions of time

- *At* is used with times (*at five o'clock, at night, at the weekend*) and also with festivals (*at Christmas* means the period of the Christmas holiday).
- *On* is used with days, including single days of festivals (*on Friday, on Sunday morning, on Christmas Day*). Note also *on holiday*.
- *In* is used for 'within' periods of time (*in May, in the evening, in 1998*) and for how long something took. (*She learned English in six months.*)
- Use *during* to say when something happened. *During* is followed by a noun. (*There was a thunderstorm during the night.*) Use *for* to answer the question 'how long?'. (*We worked on the house for six months.*)
- You can talk about a length of time using *from . . . to*. (*The film went on from seven-thirty to ten o'clock.*)
- Use *by* for 'not later than (a point of time)'. (*I'll tell you by Monday* = on or before Monday.) Use *until* to mean 'between two points of time'. (*You have until Monday to tell me.* = You have all the time before Monday to tell me.)
- Other prepositions of time include *before* and *after*. (*After leaving school she got a job as a journalist.*)

C Activities

1 Every picture tells a story

Prepositions of position and movement

- 1 Work as a class. You need a piece of paper large enough to draw a picture on. (Don't worry if you can't draw very well. It doesn't matter.) Your teacher will read a description of a picture from Activity note 37 on page 146. (The description is for the teacher only.) The description of the picture will include these prepositions: *in, at, on, into, off, above, from, to, by, over, beside, along, under*. You draw the picture as your teacher describes it. Your teacher will read the description more than once, if necessary, and you can look at what other people are drawing, if you need to. Keep your picture when it is finished, because you will need it for the next activity (called 'Storyboard').
- 2 Work as a class. Your teacher will ask one person from the class to come to the board, without the picture. The rest of the class describes the picture while the person at the board draws it again on the board. Check that the picture is correct and list any prepositions that you want to remember.

2 Storyboard

Prepositions of position and movement

- 1 Work in pairs or small groups. You are going to prepare a storyboard. A storyboard is drawn before a film is made. It is made up of drawings of all the scenes in the film. Your storyboard can have three, four, five or six pictures in it. One of the pictures in the storyboard will be the one you drew in Activity 1. You can put it in any position in the storyboard. The storyboard is called 'A child is saved from drowning'. Decide what should go in each picture of the storyboard and then one person draws it. (It does not matter how good or bad the drawing is.) If you want to, you can also write captions for each picture and write speech coming out of the mouths of people in

the story. Use as many prepositions of position and movement as you realistically can.

Example:

The man ran over the bridge and along the riverbank, dived into the water and swam to the boy.

- 2 Work in pairs, small groups or as a class. Explain your storyboard to another pair or group or to the class. List any interesting uses of prepositions of place and movement from other people's storyboards.

3 Pickpockets

Prepositions of position and movement

- 1 Work in pairs or in three groups. Three pickpockets stole a wallet outside the school where you are learning English. Your class saw them and chased them right across the town. Later you told the police what happened. Use all the prepositions below and as many of the verbs as you like to help you. Describe what happened when you chased either Pickpocket 1 or Pickpocket 2 or Pickpocket 3.
Example: *She ran across the main square and disappeared into a café.*

Pickpocket 1 was a woman in a red dress. You chased her across town on foot.

Pickpocket 2 was a man in his mid-twenties. He got away in a car. You chased him in a car.

Pickpocket 3 was a middle-aged woman. She started off on foot, then caught a bus and then a train. You chased her all the way.

Prepositions: *across, along, around, away from, behind, beside, down, from, inside, into, near, off, onto, out of, round, through, to, towards, up*

Verbs: *run, turn, go, drive, disappear, scramble, walk, slip*

- 2 Work as a class. Tell the class about your chase and list prepositions and verbs from other people's chase stories.

D Accuracy practice

1 *In, at or on?* Put in the correct prepositions of position.

- 1 I was standing _____ the bus stop _____ the end of the street.
- 2 You can often see birds _____ the grass _____ the park opposite my house.
- 3 I saw your name _____ the office door. Are you the Geoffrey Henderson whose picture has been _____ the paper?
- 4 We were _____ Paris, on holiday, and ran into her _____ the street.
- 5 Pin the notice up _____ the noticeboard, _____ the top.

2 *In or into, on or onto?* Put in the correct prepositions of movement.

- 1 Put the orange juice _____ the fridge, _____ the bottom shelf, please.
- 2 I hurt my back lifting those cases _____ the boot of the car.
- 3 As he put the tray _____ the table he dropped one of the knives _____ the floor.
- 4 A bird flew _____ my room this morning and then flew right _____ the top of the cupboard.
- 5 He came _____ the room angrily and threw his briefcase _____ the desk.

3 *In, at, on, from . . . to, for or during?* Put in the correct prepositions of time.

- 1 I never see that cat _____ the day. I think it only comes out _____ night.
- 2 They got married _____ the spring, _____ 1993.
- 3 She works late _____ Mondays and gets home _____ seven _____ the evening.
- 4 Joyce has been playing her guitar _____ three hours now. Sometimes she plays _____ early morning _____ late _____ the afternoon.
- 5 She never sends cards _____ Christmas and one year she just turned up without warning _____ Christmas Day.
- 6 I saw her _____ the weekend, or was it some time _____ the week?
- 7 It doesn't rain much _____ July so we usually go on holiday _____ that time of year.

4 Complete these sentences using *by* or *until*.

- 1 I can't take any more time off work _____ next year, I'm afraid.
- 2 We have to finish writing this _____ three o'clock.
- 3 Fasten your seatbelt, please, madam, and you'll have to finish your meal _____ the time we land.
- 4 I don't really want to switch the television off _____ the programme finishes.
- 5 You're late, we should have started _____ now.