

A preposition is a word placed before a noun (or a pronoun) to show in what relation the person or thing denoted by it stands to something else.

Kinds of Preposition

- 1) Simple Prepositions :** They are the simple words used as prepositions. For example, at, by, for, from, in, of, off, on, out, over, through, till, to, under, up, with.
- 2) Compound Prepositions :** They are generally formed by prefixing a preposition (usually a "on or be" by) to a noun, an adjective or an adverb. For example, about, above, across, along, amidst, among, around, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, between, beyond, inside, outside, underneath, within, without.
- 3) Phrase Prepositions :** When a group of words is used with the force of a single preposition, it is known as a phrase preposition. For example, He succeeded in spite of obstacles.
- 4) Participial Prepositions:** When the present participle of a verb acts as a preposition, it is known as a participle preposition. For example, There have not been too many celebrations in recent times barring those happened after Diwali.

Rules based on frequent asked questions

Rule : In is used with names of countries and large towns; at is more often used when speaking of small towns and villages.

Incorrect: He lives at Germany.

Correct: He lives in Germany.

Rule : In and at are used in speaking of things at rest; to and into are used in speaking of things in motion.

Incorrect : This week the song jumped at the top of the charts.

Correct: This week the song jumped to the top of the charts.

Rule : Till is used of time and to is used of place.

Incorrect: The office will remain open to six in the evening.

Correct: The office will remain open till six in the evening.

Rule : With often denotes the instrument used by the agent.

Incorrect: The ball was hit by the bat.

Correct: The ball was hit with the bat.

Rule : Both since and from are used before a noun denoting some point of time. However, while since is preceded by a verb in the perfect tense, from is used with the non-perfect tense.

Incorrect: India has been playing Test cricket from 1932.

Correct: India has been playing Test cricket since 1932.

Rule : While since or from is used with a point of time, for is used with a period of time.

Incorrect: The parcel has been lying here since 10 days.

Correct: The parcel has been lying here for 10 days.

Incorrect: Sanath Jayasuriya's batting performance is compared with the sales of a useful book: they score fast right from the beginning.

Correct: Sanath Jayasuriya's batting may be compared to the sales of a useful book: they score fast right from the beginning.

Rule : When we simply speak of a thing having got better, we talk of an improvement in it. When we compare two things, the second of which is better than the first, we talk of an improvement on the first thing.

Incorrect: There has been an improvement on the weather.

Correct: There has been an improvement in the weather.

Rule : In means at the end of, while within means before the end of, the said time duration.

Incorrect: We left at 5 o'clock expecting to come back in an hour and watch the 6 o'clock movie.

Incorrect: We left at 5 o'clock expecting to come back within an hour and watch the 6 o'clock movie.

Some important points about prepositions

1. The words "superior", "inferior", "senior", "junior" etc. take the preposition "to" with them.

Incorrect: Ram is senior than Mohan.

Correct: Ram is senior to Mohan.

2. The words "prefer", "preferable", "preferred" also take the preposition "to" with them.

Incorrect: I prefer tea than coffee.

Correct: I prefer tea to coffee.

3. The words "inspite of" and "despite" share the same meaning. The only difference is that inspite takes the preposition "of" whereas despite does not take any preposition.

Incorrect: Despite of bad weather, he went to school.

Correct: Despite bad weather, he went to school.

In the same way, the word "consist" takes the preposition "of" whereas "comprise" does not take any preposition.

Incorrect: The classroom comprises of twenty students.

Correct: The classroom comprises twenty students.

Following questions are based on the above concepts

Directions: Choose the most appropriate preposition in each of the following sentences.

1. The peasant refused to grovel _____ the feet of his master.

- a) on
- b) about
- c) upon
- d) at

e) None of these

2. He was killed _____ a highway man _____ a dagger.

- a) by, for

7. He had to repent _____ what he had done.

- a) at
- b) of
- c) over
- d) for
- e) None of these

8. The commentator seems to be enamoured _____ it.

- a) with
- b) over
- c) for
- d) on
- e) None of these

9. The man died _____ fever last week.

- a) with
- b) from
- c) of
- d) by
- e) None of these

10. He has not been cured _____ his disease.

- a) of
- b) from
- c) by
- d) through
- e) None of these

Directions (Q.11-20). Read each sentence to find out whether there is any grammatical error or idiomatic error in it. The error, if any, will be in one part of the sentence. The number of that part is the answer. If there is 'No error', the answer is 'e'.

11. I have been teaching a) in this school since b) several years but have c) never met such a hopeless class as this. d) No error e)

12. I have an a) appointment on the b) 9th of September on c) five O'clock. d) No error e)

13. Despite of a good a) monsoon this year, the b) production of food grains in the country c) did not go up. d) No error e)

14. Ordinarily, when in a) difficulty Renu prefers b) keeping her counsel than c) running about taking advice. d) No error e)

15. The invitation card a) says that Satish b) marries with c) Sunita next month. d) No error e)

16. She looked very a) different from the b) photograph i c) had of her. d) No error e)

17. The bride said a) that she would not b) marry the man c) over thirty five. d) No error e)

18. The reason a) of his failure b) is due to c) his negligence. d) No error e)

19. The captain and his a) wife were invited b) for the cultural c) function at my home. d) No error e)

20. Yesterday, while a) crossing the b) road he was run out c) by a