

Use prepositions as adjectives or adverbs. Avoid ending a sentence with a preposition.

The Preposition

A Preposition is a word used to show the relation of a noun or pronoun to some other word in the sentence.

In the following sentences the prepositions are shown in bold type. The words between which the prepositions show relationship are italicized.

1. The *house* **across** the *street* has been sold.
2. Sally *met* me **after** *lunch*.
3. *Everyone* **in** the *car* escaped injury.
4. The *area* **beyond** the white *line* is foul territory.
5. We *flew* **above** the *clouds*.

A preposition always introduces a phrase. The noun or pronoun at the end of a prepositional phrase is the **object of the preposition** which begins the phrase. In the preceding examples the objects of the prepositions are *street*, *lunch*, *car*, *line*, and *clouds*.

Prepositional phrases are used as adjectives (modifying a noun or pronoun) or adverbs (modifying a verb, adjective or adverb). Adverbs answer the questions *where*, *when*, *how*, or *to what extent*.

The following words are commonly used as prepositions:

about	at	but (meaning except)
above	before	by
across	behind	concerning
after	below	down
against	beneath	during
along	beside	except
amid	besides	for
among	between	from
around	beyond	in
into	since	until
like	through	unto
of	throughout	up
off	to	upon
on	toward	with
over	under	within
past	underneath	without

Exercise 1: Put parenthesis around each prepositional phrase.

1. Many groups of primitive people explain unusual natural phenomena through myths.
2. In the past the Australian aborigines told a clever tale about the mallee tree.
3. The mallee tree grows into a peculiar shape.
4. Toward the top, the trunk of the tree twists and turns.

5. For many years the tree grew straight.
6. Then, by a stroke of genius, Rat Man invented the boomerang.
7. With careful craftsmanship, he made a new weapon for hunting.
8. Because of its strange flight the boomerang fascinated the mallee.
9. The mallee followed the boomerang's flight by turning its body.
10. Since that day all descendants of the first mallee tree have had twisted trunks.

EXERCISE 2 Circle each preposition in the following sentences.

1. Luis and I have watched reruns of Star Trek for many years.
2. We have viewed each show with avid interest.
3. I even know the dialogue for some of the shows by heart.
4. A cult of Star Trek fans has developed within the last few years.
5. Every year they hold a Star Trek convention in New York City.
6. Luis and I attended the convention out of curiosity.
7. A small replica of the spaceship stood near the center of the room.
8. We approached the ship and looked inside the windows.
9. A miniature of James T Kirk sat in the captain's chair.
10. Spock lay beneath the phaser bank, fixing the machinery.

EXERCISE 3 Circle the prepositional phrases in each sentence.

1. The dog with the long tail is mine.
2. Pam writes with her left hand.
3. From the north came a driving snowstorm.
4. The sculpture by Augusta Savage is inspiring.
5. My book report was not copied from the book jacket.
6. Teams from twenty schools entered the tournament.
7. Buy your school supplies at Zing's.
8. I want another book by Shirley Jackson.
9. Madame Curie's achievements in science were remarkable.
10. You must come home before midnight.

Exercise 4. Correct the following sentences by supplying an object for the preposition.

Example 1: To be honest is a goal I strive toward.

Correction: To be honest is a goal toward which I strive.

Correction: I strive to be honest.

Example 2: I had to tell the principal whom I wrote the paper for.

Correction: I had to tell the principal for whom I wrote the paper.

1. He didn't know whom he was speaking to.
2. The teacher did not understand what he was being called for.
3. Hawaii is a place I want to go to.
4. This is not the class I signed up for.
5. I need something to set the lamp upon.
6. Where is the car I left the keys in?
7. This dictionary is a good place to get esoteric definitions from.
8. This is the rock I hid the plans under.
9. To get to the lake, there is a mountain you have to drive around.
10. The second lock is the one I put the key into.
11. The brown sofa is the one I left the guitar behind.
12. I had to tell my legislator which bill I wanted him to vote against.
13. He had nowhere to go but up.
14. It was the last train I parked the car beside.
15. This is something I will not put up with.