



# Prepositions: In, On & At

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# Important notice:

At the end of this presentation there is a link to a Microsoft Forms quiz. You must score an 80% or higher to pass the quiz.

Please take your time viewing and studying this material before you proceed with the quiz.

# Objectives



- Define the concept of a preposition and its usage
- Identify the usages of the prepositions in, on and at
- Use the prepositions in, on and at correctly

# Prepositions



Prepositions are one of the most important parts of language. They allow us to express our ideas in a clearer way. They demonstrate the relationships between two words or phrases (Douglas & Strumpf 205). A preposition can change the entire meaning of a sentence.

For example:

Ex. 1    Big cities are lively at night.        ≠        Big cities are lively until night.

The most commonly used prepositions in English are **in**, **on** and **at**.

## EXAMPLES

Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morning, afternoon, and evening</li> <li>• Months, weeks, years, decades and centuries</li> <li>• Seasons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– My father jogs <b><i>in</i></b> the mornings because the temperature is cooler.</li> <li>– I have not seen my brother <b><i>in</i></b> six months.</li> <li>– He was born <b><i>in</i></b> the 90s.</li> <li>– Cherry blossom trees bloom <b><i>in</i></b> the spring.</li> </ul>
Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A city, a country or a neighborhood</li> <li>• A complete or partial enclosure (enclosed space)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– He lives <b><i>in</i></b> Jayuya.</li> <li>– Our group is meeting <b><i>in</i></b> one of the gazebos.</li> <li>– The photo albums are <b><i>in</i></b> that box.</li> </ul>
Modes of Transportation	Cars, trucks, vans, helicopters, submarines, taxis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Living <b><i>in</i></b> a submarine requires great mental stability.</li> </ul>

# Prepositions: On

## EXAMPLES

### Time

- Dates and days (of the week)
  - She was born on April 24, 1999.
  - I take 3 classes on Mondays.
- Holidays
  - He arrives on New Year’s Eve.

### Places

- Streets and avenues
  - Meet me on Juan Ponce De León Street.
  - He lives on this avenue.
- A surface
  - Please do not walk on the lawn.

### Modes of Transportation

- Trains, boats, animals, planes, skateboards, buses
  - I often see people on horseback around my neighborhood.

## EXAMPLES

### Time

- A specific time of day
- Night

- I will see you at 3 o'clock.
- The Christmas decorations look prettier at night.

### Places

- A complete address
- Showing a specific point or location
- A general area

- The University of Puerto Rico Río Piedras campus is located at 14 Ave. Universidad Ste. 1401.
- Look at that cloud!
- We are at Cantón Mall.
- We are at the park.

Modes of  
 Transportation

N/A

N/A

# Prepositions

**In**, **on** and **at** are also used in situations where their meaning is not literal like in the expressions, “She’s **in** love.” or “He has a lot **on** his shoulders.” While these usages may seem confusing at first, they are based on rules.



Consider the following usages and examples:

- She’s **in** love.
- She’s **in** pain
- They vowed to love each other **in** sickness or **in** health.
- He has a lot **on** his shoulders/mind.
  
- Her research is **in** Nuclear Physics.
- Her research paper was **on** nuclear fusion.

Here the preposition **in** is being used to describe a state of being.

Here the preposition **on** is being used to describe something on a surface however its usage is *metaphorical* as the person does not literally have anything resting on their shoulders or mind.

In the first example the preposition **in** is used to describe the field of study her research is a part of while in the second example the preposition **on** is used to describe the topic her research paper discusses.



# References



Strumpf, Michael, and Auriel Douglas. *The Grammar Bible:*

*Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Grammar*

*but Didn't Know Whom to Ask.* Henry Holt and Company,

2004.

Beare, Kenneth. “Basic English Prepositions of Time and Place: At, In, On, and To.”

*ThoughtCo.* 23 Sept. 2018,

<https://www.thoughtco.com/english-prepositions-at-in-on-to-4165180>

After completing the module, click on the following link to take the quiz and send the report to your professor:

<https://forms.office.com/r/UTFbQY6bs1>

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