



## ESL: PREPOSITIONS

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### Definition:

Prepositions are used before nouns or pronouns in prepositional phrases. They combine with adjectives and verbs in certain ways. Prepositions are generally partnered as such: verb + *preposition*.

Prepositions can be followed by noun objects (transitive) or by no noun object (intransitive). In certain combinations, the verb and the preposition are separated by another word.

### Examples of Prepositions:

about	before	for	out	under
above	beside	from	outside	underneath
across	beyond	in	over	unlike
after	between	inside	past	until
against	during	into	on	up
along	but	like	round	upon
among	by	near	since	with
at	as	of	to	with/within/without

### Intransitive – Nonseparable:

These prepositions do not need a noun after them. They follow the pattern *noun subject + verb*.

Noun Subject	+	Verb
He		glanced <b>out</b> .
Somebody		rushed <b>in</b> .
I		strolled <b>away</b> .
Rita		sat <b>down</b> .

### Transitive – Separable:

There are verb-preposition combinations that take noun objects. The preposition can be placed after the verb or after the direct object, but you should try to avoid splitting two-worded verbs.

1. I got **back** my wallet.

I **got** my wallet **back**.



2. She couldn't **take off** her ring.

She couldn't **take** her ring **off**.

Transitive – Nonseparable:

Some combinations of verb-prepositions can not be separated without distorting the meaning.

Examples:

keep up with	looking forward	looked up to	fell into
counted on	put up with	take up	looking into
care for	get away with	run into	take after
get on	get along	turn in	break in

Transitive – Must be Separated:

Certain combinations must be separated.

1. **keep** an eye **on**
2. **take** advantage **of**
3. **make** fun **of**
4. **take** refuse **behind**
5. **take** credit **for**
6. **take** pride **in**

Preposition + -ing verbal (gerund):

The *-ing* verbal that functions as a noun (the gerund) frequently occurs after a preposition.

1. They congratulated him **on winning** the prize.
2. Sue expressed interest **in participating** in the fundraiser.
3. He ran three miles **without stopping**.
4. The cheese is the right consistency **for spreading**.

NOTE: Remember, "to" can be used as a preposition (to the show) or with an infinitive for of a verb (to jump).

1. They want **to adopt** a child.
2. They are looking forward **to adopting** a child.

Common Verb-Preposition Combinations:

ashamed of	afraid of	aware of	fond of	full of
jealous of	proud of	tired of	interested in	content with
grateful to (someone or something)	responsible to (someone) (for something)	anxious about	satisfied with	

