

Verb + preposition 1 **to** and **at**

A

Verb + **to****talk / speak TO** somebody (**with** is also possible but less usual)

- Who was that man you were **talking to**?

listen TO ...

- We spent the evening **listening to** music. (*not* listening music)

apologise TO somebody (for ...)

- They **apologised to me** for what happened. (*not* They apologised me)

explain something **TO** somebody

- Can you **explain** this word **to me**? (*not* explain me this word)

explain / describe (to somebody) what/how/why ...

- I **explained to them** why I was worried. (*not* I explained them)
- Let me **describe to you** what I saw. (*not* Let me describe you)

B

We do not use **to** with these verbs:**phone / call / email / text** somebody

- I **called the airline** to cancel my flight. (*not* called to the airline)

but **write** (a letter) **to** somebody**answer** somebody/something

- He refused to **answer my question**. (*not* answer to my question)

but **reply to** an email / a letter etc.**ask** somebody

- Can I **ask you** a question? (*not* ask to you)

thank somebody (for something)

- He **thanked me** for helping him. (*not* He thanked to me)

C

Verb + **at****look / stare / glance AT ... , have a look / take a look AT ...**

- Why are you **looking at** me like that?

laugh AT ...

- I look stupid with this haircut. Everybody will **laugh at** me.

aim / point (something) **AT ... , shoot / fire** (a gun) **AT ...**

- Don't **point** that knife **at** me. It's dangerous.
- We saw someone with a gun **shooting at** birds, but he didn't hit any.

D

Some verbs can be followed by **at** or **to**, with a difference in meaning. For example:**shout AT** somebody (when you are angry)

- He got very angry and started **shouting at** me.

shout TO somebody (so that they can hear you)

- He **shouted to** me from the other side of the street.

throw something **AT** somebody/something (in order to hit them)

- Somebody **threw** an egg **at** the minister.

throw something **TO** somebody (for somebody to catch)

- Lisa shouted 'Catch!' and **threw** the keys **to** me from the window.

132.1 Which is correct?

- 1 a Can you explain this word to me?
 b Can you explain me this word?
- 2 a I got angry with Mark. Afterwards, I apologised to him.
 b I got angry with Mark. Afterwards I apologised him.
- 3 a Amy won't be able to help you. There's no point in asking to her.
 b Amy won't be able to help you. There's no point in asking her.
- 4 a I need somebody to explain me what I have to do.
 b I need somebody to explain to me what I have to do.
- 5 a They didn't understand the system, so I explained it to them.
 b They didn't understand the system, so I explained it them.
- 6 a I like to sit on the beach and listen to the sound of the sea.
 b I like to sit on the beach and listen the sound of the sea.
- 7 a I asked them to describe me exactly what happened.
 b I asked them to describe to me exactly what happened.
- 8 a We'd better phone the restaurant to reserve a table.
 b We'd better phone to the restaurant to reserve a table.
- 9 a It was a difficult question. I couldn't answer to it.
 b It was a difficult question. I couldn't answer it.
- 10 a I explained everybody the reasons for my decision.
 b I explained to everybody the reasons for my decision.
- 11 a I thanked everybody for all the help they had given me.
 b I thanked to everybody for all the help they had given me.
- 12 a My friend texted to me to let me know she was going to be late.
 b My friend texted me to let me know she was going to be late.

132.2 Complete the sentences. Use these verbs + the correct preposition:

~~explain~~ ~~laugh~~ listen look point reply speak throw throw

- 1 I look stupid with this haircut. Everybody will laugh at me.
- 2 I don't understand this. Can you explain it to me?
- 3 Sue and Kevin had an argument and now they're refusing to each other.
- 4 Be careful with those scissors! Don't them me!
- 5 I'm not sure where we are. I'll have to the map.
- 6 Please me! I've got something important to tell you.
- 7 Don't stones the birds! It's cruel.
- 8 If you don't want that sandwich, it the birds. They'll eat it.
- 9 I tried to contact Tina, but she didn't my emails.

132.3 Put in to or at.

- 1 They apologised to me for what happened.
- 2 I glanced my watch to see what time it was.
- 3 Please don't shout me! Try to calm down.
- 4 I saw Sue as I was cycling along the road. I shouted her, but she didn't hear me.
- 5 Don't listen what he says. He doesn't know what he's talking about.
- 6 What's so funny? What are you laughing ?
- 7 Could I have a look your magazine, please?
- 8 I'm lonely. I need somebody to talk
- 9 She was so angry she threw a book the wall.
- 10 The woman sitting opposite me on the train kept staring me.
- 11 Can I speak you a moment? There's something I want to ask you.

Verb + preposition 2 about/for/of/after

A

Verb + about

talk / read / know ABOUT ... , tell somebody ABOUT ...

- We **talked about** a lot of things at the meeting.

have a discussion ABOUT something, *but discuss* something (no preposition)

- We had **a discussion about** what we should do.
 We **discussed** a lot of things at the meeting. (*not discussed about*)

do something **ABOUT** something = *do something to improve a bad situation*

- If you're worried about the problem, you should **do** something **about** it.

B

Verb + for

ask (somebody) **FOR** ...

- I sent an email to the company **asking** them **for** more information about the job.
but 'I **asked** him **the way** to ...', 'She **asked** me **my name**' (no preposition)

apply (**TO** a person, a company etc.) **FOR** a job etc.

- I think you'd be good at this job. Why don't you **apply for** it?

wait FOR ...

- Don't **wait for** me. I'll join you later.
 I'm not going out yet. I'm **waiting for** the rain to stop.

search (a person / a place / a bag etc.) **FOR** ...

- I've **searched** the house **for** my keys, but I still can't find them.

leave (a place) **FOR** another place

- I haven't seen her since she **left** (home) **for** the office this morning.
(not left to the office)

C

Care about, care for and take care of

care ABOUT somebody/something = *think that somebody/something is important*

- He's very selfish. He doesn't **care about** other people.

We say '**care what/where/how ...**' etc. (*without about*):

- You can do what you like. I don't **care what** you do.

care FOR somebody/something

(1) = *like something* (usually negative sentences)

- I don't **care for** very hot weather. (= I don't like ...)

(2) = *look after somebody*

- Alan is 85 and lives alone. He needs somebody to **care for** him.

take care OF ... = *look after, keep safe, take responsibility for*

- Don't worry about me. I can **take care of** myself.
 I'll **take care of** the travel arrangements. You don't need to do anything.

D

Look for and look after

look FOR ... = *search for, try to find*

- I've lost my keys. Can you help me to **look for** them?

look AFTER ... = *take care of, keep safe or in good condition*

- Alan is 85 and lives alone. He needs somebody to **look after** him. (*not look for*)
 You can borrow this book, but you must promise to **look after** it.

133.1 Put in the correct preposition. If no preposition is necessary, leave the space empty.

- I'm not going out yet. I'm waiting for the rain to stop.
- Don't ask me money. I don't have any.
- I've applied a job at the factory. I don't know if I'll get it.
- I've applied three colleges. I hope one of them accepts me.
- I've searched everywhere Joe, but I haven't been able to find him.
- I don't want to talk what happened last night. Let's forget it.
- I don't want to discuss what happened last night. Let's forget it.
- We had an interesting discussion the problem, but we didn't reach a decision.
- We discussed the problem, but we didn't reach a decision.
- I sent her an email. Now I'm waiting her to reply.
- Ken and Sonia are travelling in Italy. They're in Rome right now, and tomorrow they leave Venice.
- The roof of the house is in very bad condition. I think we ought to do something it.
- We waited Steve for half an hour, but he never came.
- Tomorrow morning I have to catch a plane. I'm leaving my house the airport at 7.30.

133.2 Put in the correct preposition after **care**. If no preposition is necessary, leave the space empty.

- He's very selfish. He doesn't care about other people.
- Who's going to take care you when you are old?
- She doesn't care the exam. She doesn't care whether she passes or fails.
- 'Do you like this coat?' 'Not really. I don't care the colour.'
- Don't worry about the shopping. I'll take care that.
- He gave up his job to care his elderly father.
- I want to have a good holiday. I don't care the cost.
- I want to have a good holiday. I don't care how much it costs.

133.3 Complete the sentences with **look for** or **look after**. Use the correct form of **look** (**looks/looked/looking**).

- I looked for my keys, but I couldn't find them anywhere.
- Kate is a job. I hope she finds one soon.
- Who you when you were ill?
- I'm Liz. I need to ask her something. Have you seen her?
- The car park was full, so we had to somewhere else to park.
- A babysitter is somebody who other people's children.

133.4 Complete the sentences with these verbs (in the correct form) + a preposition:

apply ask do leave look ~~search~~ talk wait

- Police are searching for the man who escaped from prison.
- Sarah wasn't ready. We had to her.
- I think Ben likes his job, but he doesn't it much.
- When I'd finished my meal, I the waiter the bill.
- Cathy is unemployed. She has several jobs, but she hasn't had any luck.
- If something is wrong, why don't you something it?
- Helen's car is very old, but it's in excellent condition. She it very well.
- Diane is from Boston, but now she lives in Paris. She Boston Paris when she was 19.

Verb + preposition 3 about and of

A

hear ABOUT ... = *be told about something*

- Did you **hear about** the fire at the hotel yesterday?

hear OF ... = *know that somebody/something exists*

- 'Who is Tom Hart?' 'I have no idea. I've never **heard of** him.' (*not heard from him*)

hear FROM ... = *be in contact with somebody*

- 'Have you **heard from** Jane recently?' 'Yes, she called me a few days ago.'

B

think ABOUT ... and **think OF ...**

When you **think ABOUT** something, you consider it, you concentrate your mind on it:

- I've **thought about** what you said and I've decided to take your advice.
 'Will you lend me the money?' 'I'll **think about** it.'

When you **think OF** something, the idea comes to your mind:

- It was my idea. I **thought of** it first. (*not thought about it*)
 I felt embarrassed. I couldn't **think of** anything to say. (*not think about anything*)

We also use **think of** when we ask or give an opinion:

- 'What did you **think of** the movie?' 'I didn't **think much of** it.' (= I didn't like it much)

The difference is sometimes very small and you can use **of** or **about**:

- When I'm alone, I often **think of** (*or about*) you.

You can say **think of** or **think about** doing something (for possible future actions):

- My sister is **thinking of** (*or about*) going to Canada. (= she is considering it)

C

dream ABOUT ... (when you are asleep)

- I **dreamt about** you last night.

dream OF or ABOUT being something / doing something = *imagine*

- Do you **dream of** (*or about*) being rich and famous?

I wouldn't dream OF doing something = *I would never do it*

- 'Don't tell anyone what I said.' 'No, I **wouldn't dream of** it.' (= I would never do it)

D

complain (TO somebody) ABOUT ... = *say that you are not satisfied*

- We **complained to** the manager of the restaurant **about** the food.

complain OF a pain, an illness etc. = *say that you have a pain etc.*

- We called the doctor because George was **complaining of** a pain in his stomach.

E

remind somebody ABOUT ... = *tell somebody not to forget*

- I'm glad you **reminded** me **about** the meeting. I'd completely forgotten about it.

remind somebody OF ... = *cause somebody to remember*

- This house **reminds** me **of** the one I lived in when I was a child.
 Look at this photograph of Richard. Who does he **remind** you **of**?

F

warn somebody ABOUT a person or thing which is bad, dangerous, unusual etc.

- I knew he was a strange person. I had been **warned about** him. (*not warned of him*)
 Vicky **warned me** about the traffic. She said it would be bad.

warn somebody ABOUT or OF a danger, something bad which might happen later

- Scientists have **warned** us **about** (*or of*) the effects of climate change.

134.1 Complete the sentences using **hear** or **heard** + a preposition (**about/of/from**).

- I've never heard of Tom Hart. Who is he?
- 'Did you the accident last night?' 'Yes, Vicky told me.'
- Jane used to call me quite often, but I haven't her for a long time now.
- A: Have you a writer called William Hudson?
B: No, I don't think so. What sort of writer is he?
- Thanks for your email. It was good to you.
- 'Do you want to our holiday?' 'Not now. Tell me later.'
- I live in a small town in the north of England. You've probably never it.

134.2 Complete the sentences using **think about** or **think of**. Sometimes both **about** and **of** are possible. Use the correct form of **think** (**think/thinking/thought**).

- You look serious. What are you thinking about ?
- I need time to make decisions. I like to things carefully.
- That's a good idea. Why didn't I that?
- A: I've finished reading the book you lent me.
B: What did you it? Did you think it was good?
- We're going out to eat this evening. Would you like to come?
- I don't really want to go out with Tom tonight. I'll have to an excuse.
- When I was offered the job, I didn't accept immediately. I went away and it for a while. In the end I decided to take the job.
- I don't much this coffee. It's like water.
- Katherine is homesick. She's always her family back home.
- A: Do you think I should apply to do the course?
B: I can't any reason why not.

134.3 Put in the correct preposition.

- Did you hear about the fire at the hotel yesterday?
- 'I had a strange dream last night.' 'Did you? What did you dream?'
- Our neighbours complained us the noise we made last night.
- Kevin was complaining pains in his chest, so he went to the doctor.
- I love this music. It reminds me a warm day in spring.
- He loves his job. He thinks his work all the time, he dreams it, he talks it and I'm fed up with hearing it.
- 'We've got no money. What can we do?' 'Don't worry. I'll think something.'
- Jackie warned me the water. She said it wasn't safe to drink.
- We warned our children the dangers of playing in the street.

134.4 Complete the sentences using these verbs (in the correct form) + a preposition:

complain dream hear remind remind ~~think~~ think warn

- It was my idea. I thought of it first.
- Ben is never satisfied. He's always something.
- I can't make a decision yet. I need time to your proposal.
- Before you go into the house, I must you the dog. He's bitten people before, so be careful.
- She's not a well-known singer. Not many people have her.
- A: You wouldn't go away without telling me, would you?
B: Of course not. I wouldn't it.
- I would have forgotten my appointment if Jane hadn't me it.
- Do you see that man over there? Does he you anybody you know?

Verb + preposition 4 of/for/from/on

A

Verb + of

accuse / suspect somebody **OF** ...

- Sue **accused** me **of** being selfish.
- Some students were **suspected of** cheating in the exam.

approve / disapprove OF ...

- His parents don't **approve of** what he does, but they can't stop him.

die OF or FROM an illness etc.

- 'What did he **die of**?' 'A heart attack.'

consist OF ...

- We had an enormous meal. It **consisted of** seven courses.

B

Verb + for

pay (somebody) **FOR** ...

- I didn't have enough money to **pay for** the meal. (*not pay the meal*)
- but pay a bill / a fine / a fee / tax / rent / a sum of money etc. (no preposition)*

- I didn't have enough money to **pay the rent**.

thank / forgive somebody **FOR** ...

- I'll never **forgive** them **for** what they did.

apologise (TO somebody) FOR ...

- When I realised I was wrong, I **apologised (to them) for** my mistake.

blame somebody/something **FOR** ... , somebody is **to blame FOR** ...

- Everybody **blamed** me **for** the accident.
- Everybody said that I was **to blame for** the accident.

blame (a problem etc.) **ON** ...

- The accident wasn't my fault. Don't **blame** it **on** me.

C

Verb + from

suffer FROM an illness etc.

- There's been an increase in the number of people **suffering from** heart disease.

protect somebody/something **FROM** ...

- Sun block **protects** the skin **from** the sun.

D

Verb + on

depend / rely ON ...

- 'What time will you be home?' 'I don't know. It **depends on** the traffic.'
- You can **rely on** Anna. She always keeps her promises.

You can use **depend + when/where/how** etc. with or without **on**:

- 'Are you going to buy it?' 'It **depends how much** it is.' (*or It depends **on** how much*)

live ON money/food

- Michael's salary is very low. It isn't enough to **live on**.

congratulate / compliment somebody **ON** ...

- I **congratulated** her **on** doing so well in her exams.
- The meal was really good. I **complimented** Mark **on** his cooking skills.

135.1 Put in the correct preposition. If no preposition is necessary, leave the space empty.

- 1 Some students were suspected of cheating in the exam.
- 2 Are you going to apologise what you did?
- 3 The apartment consists three rooms, a kitchen and bathroom.
- 4 I was accused lying, but I was telling the truth.
- 5 We finished our meal, paid the bill, and left the restaurant.
- 6 The accident was my fault, so I had to pay the repairs.
- 7 Some people are dying hunger, while others eat too much.
- 8 I called Helen to thank her the present she sent me.
- 9 The government is popular. Most people approve what they're doing.
- 10 Do you blame the government the economic situation?
- 11 When something goes wrong, you always blame it other people.

135.2 Complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first.

- 1 Sue said that I was selfish.
Sue accused me of being selfish
- 2 The misunderstanding was my fault, so I apologised.
I apologised
- 3 Jane won the tournament, so I congratulated her.
I congratulated
- 4 He has enemies, and he has a bodyguard to protect him.
He has a bodyguard to protect
- 5 There are eleven players in a football team.
A football team consists
- 6 Sandra eats only bread and eggs.
Sandra lives
- 7 You can't say that your problems are my fault.
You can't blame

135.3 Complete the sentences using these verbs (in the correct form) + a preposition:

accuse apologise ~~approve~~ congratulate depend live pay suffer

- 1 His parents don't approve of what he does, but they can't stop him.
- 2 When you went to the theatre with Paul, who the tickets?
- 3 It's not pleasant when you are something you didn't do.
- 4 We hope to go to the beach tomorrow, but it the weather.
- 5 Things are cheap there. You can very little money.
- 6 You were rude to Lisa. I think you should her.
- 7 Alex back pain. He spends too much time working at his desk.
- 8 When I saw David, I him passing his driving test.

135.4 Put in the correct preposition. If no preposition is necessary, leave the space empty.

- 1 I'll never forgive them for what they did.
- 2 They wore warm clothes to protect themselves the cold.
- 3 You know you can always rely me if you need any help.
- 4 Sophie doesn't have enough money to pay her college fees.
- 5 She's often unwell. She suffers very bad headaches.
- 6 I don't know whether I'll go out tonight. It depends how I feel.
- 7 She hasn't got a job. She depends her parents for money.
- 8 My usual breakfast consists fruit, cereal and coffee.
- 9 I complimented her her English. She spoke really well.

A

Verb + in

believe IN ...

- Do you **believe in** God? (= Do you believe that God exists?)
- I **believe in** saying what I think. (= I believe it is right to say what I think)

but believe something (= believe it is true), **believe** somebody (= believe they are telling the truth)

- The story can't be true. I don't **believe it**. (*not believe in it*)

specialise IN ...

- Helen is a lawyer. She **specialises in** company law.

succeed IN ...

- I hope you **succeed in** finding the job you want.

B

Verb + into

break INTO ...

- Our house was **broken into** a few days ago, but nothing was stolen.

crash / drive / bump / run INTO ...

- He lost control of the car and **crashed into** a wall.

divide / cut / split something **INTO** two or more parts

- The book is **divided into** three parts.

translate a book etc. **FROM** one language **INTO** another

- She's a famous writer. Her books have been **translated into** many languages.

C

Verb + with

collide WITH ...

- There was an accident this morning. A bus **collided with** a car.

fill something **WITH ...** (*but full of ...* – see [Unit 131B](#))

- Take this saucepan and **fill it with** water.

provide / supply somebody **WITH ...**

- The school **provides** all its students **with** books.

D

Verb + to

happen TO ...

- What **happened to** that gold watch you used to have? (= where is it now?)

invite somebody **TO** a party / a wedding etc.

- They only **invited** a few people **to** their wedding.

prefer one thing/person **TO** another

- I **prefer** tea **to** coffee.

E

Verb + on

concentrate ON ...

- I tried to **concentrate on** my work, but I kept thinking about other things.

insist ON ...

- I wanted to go alone, but some friends of mine **insisted on** coming with me.

spend (money) **ON ...**

- How much do you **spend on** food each week?

136.1 Complete the sentences using these verbs (in the correct form) + a preposition:

believe concentrate divide drive fill happen ~~insist~~ invite succeed

- I wanted to go alone, but my friends insisted on coming with me.
- I haven't seen Mike for ages. I wonder what has him.
- We've been the party, but unfortunately we can't go.
- It's a very large house. It's four apartments.
- I don't ghosts. I think people imagine that they see them.
- Steve gave me an empty bucket and told me to it water.
- I was driving along when the car in front stopped suddenly. I couldn't stop in time and the back of it.
- Don't try and do two things together. one thing at a time.
- It wasn't easy, but in the end we finding a solution to the problem.

136.2 Complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first.

- There was a collision between a bus and a car.
A bus collided with a car
- I don't mind big cities, but I prefer small towns.
I prefer
- I got all the information I needed from Jane.
Jane provided me
- This morning I bought a pair of shoes which cost £70.
This morning I spent
- There are ten districts in the city.
The city is divided

136.3 Put in the correct preposition. If the sentence is already complete, leave the space empty.

- The school provides all its students with books.
- A strange thing happened me a few days ago.
- Mark decided to give up sport to concentrate his studies.
- Money should be used well. I don't believe wasting it.
- My present job isn't wonderful, but I prefer it what I did before.
- I hope you succeed getting what you want.
- As I was coming out of the room, I collided somebody who was coming in.
- There was an awful noise as the car crashed a tree.
- Patrick is a photographer. He specialises sports photography.
- Do you spend a lot of money clothes?
- I was amazed when Joe walked into the room. I couldn't believe it.
- Somebody broke my car and stole the radio.
- I was quite cold, but Tom insisted having the window open.
- The teacher decided to split the class four groups.
- I filled the tank, but unfortunately I filled it the wrong kind of petrol.
- Some words are difficult to translate one language another.

136.4 Use your own ideas to complete these sentences. Use a preposition.

- I wanted to go out alone, but my friend insisted on coming with me
- I spend a lot of money
- I saw the accident. The car crashed
- Chris prefers basketball
- The restaurant we went to specialises
- Shakespeare's plays have been translated