

# In/at/on (position) 1

## A

### In



**in** a room  
**in** a building  
**in** a box



**in** a garden  
**in** a town/country  
**in** the city centre



**in** a pool  
**in** the sea  
**in** a river

- There's no-one **in the room** / **in the building** / **in the garden**.
- What have you got **in your hand** / **in your mouth**?
- When we were **in Italy**, we spent a few days **in Venice**.
- I have a friend who lives **in a small village in the mountains**.
- There were some people swimming **in the pool** / **in the sea** / **in the river**.

## B

### At



**at** the bus stop



**at** the door



**at** the roundabout

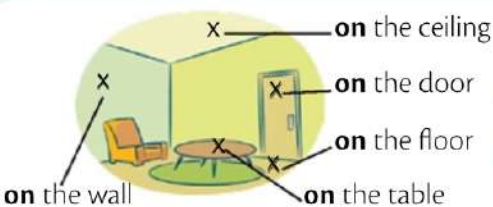


**at** reception

- Who is that man standing **at the bus stop** / **at the door** / **at the window**?
- Turn left **at the traffic lights** / **at the church** / **at the roundabout** / **at the junction**.
- We have to get off the bus **at the next stop**.
- When you leave the hotel, please leave your **key at reception**. (= at the reception desk)

## C

### On



- I sat **on the floor** / **on the ground** / **on the grass** / **on the beach** / **on a chair**.
- There's a dirty mark **on the wall** / **on the ceiling** / **on your nose** / **on your shirt**.
- Have you seen the notice **on the notice board** / **on the door**?
- You'll find details of TV programmes **on page seven** (of the newspaper).
- The hotel is **on a small island** in the middle of a lake.

## D

### Compare **in** and **at**:

- There were a lot of people **in the shop**. It was very crowded.  
Go along this road, then turn left **at the shop**.
- I'll meet you **in the hotel lobby**.  
I'll meet you **at the entrance to the hotel**.

### Compare **in** and **on**:

- There is some water **in the bottle**.  
There is a label **on the bottle**.











### Compare **at** and **on**:

- There is somebody **at the door**. Shall I go and see who it is?  
There is a notice **on the door**. It says 'Do not disturb'.

# Exercises

**123.1** Answer the questions about the pictures. Use **in**, **at** or **on** with the words below the pictures.

<p>1</p>  <p>(bottle)</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>(arm)</p>	<p>3</p>  <p>(traffic lights)</p>	<p>4</p>  <p>(door)</p>
<p>5</p>  <p>(wall)</p>	<p>6</p>  <p>(Paris)</p>	<p>7</p>  <p>(gate)</p>	<p>8</p>  <p>(beach)</p>

- Where's the label? On the bottle.
- Where's the fly? .....
- Where is the car waiting? .....
- a Where's the notice? .....
- b Where's the key? .....
- Where are the shelves? .....
- Where's the Eiffel Tower? .....
- a Where's the man standing? .....
- b Where's the bird? .....
- Where are the children playing? .....

**123.2** Complete the sentences. Use **in**, **at** or **on** + the following:

**the window**      **your coffee**      **the mountains**      **that tree**  
**my guitar**      **the river**      **the island**      **the next petrol station**

- Look at those people swimming in the river.
- One of the strings ..... is broken.
- There's something wrong with the car. We'd better stop .....
- Would you like sugar .....
- The leaves ..... are a beautiful colour.
- Last year we had a wonderful skiing holiday .....
- There's nobody living ..... It's uninhabited.
- He spends most of the day sitting ..... and looking outside.

**123.3** Complete the sentences with **in**, **at** or **on**.

- There was a long queue of people at the bus stop.
- Nicola was wearing a silver ring ..... her little finger.
- There was an accident ..... the crossroads this morning.
- I wasn't sure whether I had come to the right office. There was no name ..... the door.
- There are some beautiful trees ..... the park.
- You'll find the sports results ..... the back page of the newspaper.
- I wouldn't like an office job. I couldn't spend the whole day sitting ..... a computer.
- My brother lives ..... a small village ..... the south-west of England.
- The man the police are looking for has a scar ..... his right cheek.
- The headquarters of the company are ..... Milan.
- I like that picture hanging ..... the wall ..... the kitchen.
- If you come here by bus, get off ..... the stop after the traffic lights.



## In/at/on (position) 2

A

We say that somebody/something is:

<b>in a line / in a row / in a queue</b>	<b>in bed</b>
<b>in the sky / in the world</b>	<b>in the country / in the countryside</b>
<b>in an office / in a department</b>	<b>in a picture / in a photo / in a photograph</b>
<b>in a book / in a paper (= newspaper) / in a magazine / in a letter</b>	

- When I go to the cinema, I like to sit **in the front row**.
- James isn't up yet. He's still **in bed**.
- It was a lovely day. There wasn't a cloud **in the sky**.
- I've just started working **in the sales department**.
- Who is the woman **in that photo**?
- Have you seen this picture **in today's paper**?



in a row

B

**on the left / on the right**    **on the left-hand side / on the right-hand side**  
**on the ground floor / on the first floor / on the second floor** etc.  
**on a map / on a menu / on a list**  
**on a farm**

- In Britain we drive **on the left**. *or ... on the left-hand side.*
- Our apartment is **on the second floor** of the building.
- Here's a shopping list. Don't buy anything that's not **on the list**.
- Have you ever worked **on a farm**?

We say that a place is **on a river / on a road / on the coast**:

- Budapest is **on the** (River) **Danube**.
- The town where you live – is it **on the coast** or inland?



Also **on the way**:

- We stopped to buy some things in a shop **on the way** home.

C

**at the top (of) / at the bottom (of) / at the end (of)**

- Write your name **at the top of the page**.
- Jane's house is **at the other end of the street**.

**at the top (of the page)**

**at the bottom (of the page)**



D

**in the front / in the back** of a car

- I was sitting **in the back** (of the car) when we crashed.

**at the front / at the back** of a building / theatre / group of people etc.

- The garden is **at the back of the house**.
- Let's sit **at the front** (of the cinema).
- We were **at the back**, so we couldn't see very well.

**on the front / on the back** of a letter / piece of paper etc.

- I wrote the date **on the back of the photo**.

**at the back**



**at the front**

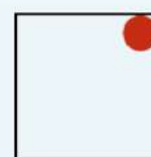
E

**in the corner** of a room

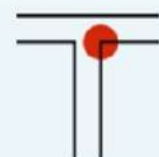
- The TV is **in the corner** of the room.

**at the corner** *or* **on the corner** of a street

- There is a small shop **at/on the corner** of the street.



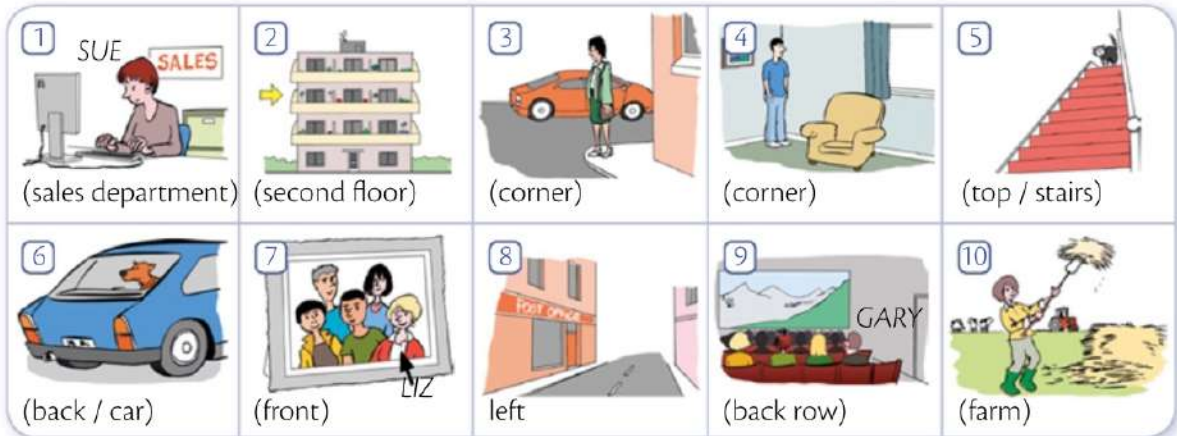
**in the corner**



**at/on the corner**

# Exercises

**124.1** Answer the questions about the pictures. Use **in**, **at** or **on** with the words below the pictures.



- 1 Where does Sue work? In the sales department.
- 2 Sue lives in this building. Where's her flat exactly? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Where is the woman standing? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Where is the man standing? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Where's the cat? \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Where's the dog? \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 Liz is in this group of people. Where is she? \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 Where's the post office? \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 Gary is at the cinema. Where is he sitting? \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 Where does Kate work? \_\_\_\_\_

**124.2** Complete the sentences. Use **in**, **at** or **on** + the following:

**the west coast      the world      the back of the class      the sky**  
**the front row      the right      the back of this card      the way to work**

- 1 It was a lovely day. There wasn't a cloud in the sky.
- 2 In most countries people drive \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 What is the tallest building \_\_\_\_\_?
- 4 I usually buy a newspaper \_\_\_\_\_ in the morning.
- 5 San Francisco is \_\_\_\_\_ of the United States.
- 6 We went to the theatre last night. We had seats \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7 I couldn't hear the teacher. She spoke quietly and I was sitting \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8 I don't have your address. Could you write it \_\_\_\_\_?

**124.3** Complete the sentences with **in**, **at** or **on**.

- 1 Write your name at the top of the page.
- 2 Is your sister \_\_\_\_\_ this photograph? I don't recognise her.
- 3 I didn't feel very well when I woke up, so I stayed \_\_\_\_\_ bed.
- 4 We normally use the front entrance to the building, but there's another one \_\_\_\_\_ the back.
- 5 Is there anything interesting \_\_\_\_\_ the paper today?
- 6 There was a list of names, but my name wasn't \_\_\_\_\_ the list.
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_ the end of the street, there is a path leading to the river.
- 8 I love to look up at the stars \_\_\_\_\_ the sky at night.
- 9 When I'm a passenger in a car, I prefer to sit \_\_\_\_\_ the front.
- 10 I live in a very small village. You probably won't find it \_\_\_\_\_ your map.
- 11 Joe works \_\_\_\_\_ the furniture department of a large store.
- 12 Paris is \_\_\_\_\_ the River Seine.
- 13 I don't like cities. I'd much prefer to live \_\_\_\_\_ the country.
- 14 My office is \_\_\_\_\_ the top floor. It's \_\_\_\_\_ the left as you come out of the lift.



## In/at/on (position) 3

## A

**In hospital / at work** etc.

We say that somebody is **in hospital / in prison / in jail**:

- Anna's mother is **in hospital**.

We say that somebody is **at work / at school / at university / at college**:

- I'll be **at work** until 5.30.  
 Julia is studying chemistry **at university**.

We say that somebody is **at home** or **is home** (with or without **at**), but we say **do something at home** (with **at**):

- I'll **be at home** all evening. *or* I'll **be home** all evening.  
 Shall we go to a restaurant or **eat at home**?

## B

**At a party / at a concert** etc.

We say that somebody is **at** an event (**at a party / at a conference** etc.):

- Were there many people **at the party / at the meeting / at the wedding**?  
 I saw Steve **at a conference / at a concert** on Saturday.

## C

**In and at for buildings**

You can often use **in** or **at** with buildings. For example, you can eat **in a restaurant** or **at a restaurant**; you can buy something **in a supermarket** or **at a supermarket**. We usually say **at** when we say where an event takes place (for example: a concert, a film, a party, a meeting):

- We went to a concert **at the National Concert Hall**.  
 The meeting took place **at the company's head office** in Frankfurt.  
 There was a robbery **at the supermarket**.

We say **at the station / at the airport**:

- There's no need to meet me **at the station**. I can get a taxi.

We say **at** somebody's house:

- I was **at Helen's house** last night. *or* I was **at Helen's** last night.

Also **at the doctor's / at the hairdresser's** etc.

We use **in** when we are thinking about the building itself. Compare:

- We had dinner **at the hotel**.  
 All the rooms **in the hotel** have air conditioning. (*not* at the hotel)  
 I was **at Helen's (house)** last night.  
 It's always cold **in Helen's house**. The heating doesn't work well. (*not* at Helen's house)

## D

**In and at for towns** etc.

We normally use **in** with cities, towns and villages:

- The Louvre is a famous art museum **in Paris**. (*not* at Paris)  
 Sam's parents live **in a village** in the south of France. (*not* at a village)

We use **at** when we think of the place as a point or station on a journey:

- Does this train stop **at Oxford**? (= at Oxford station)

## E

**On a bus / in a car** etc.

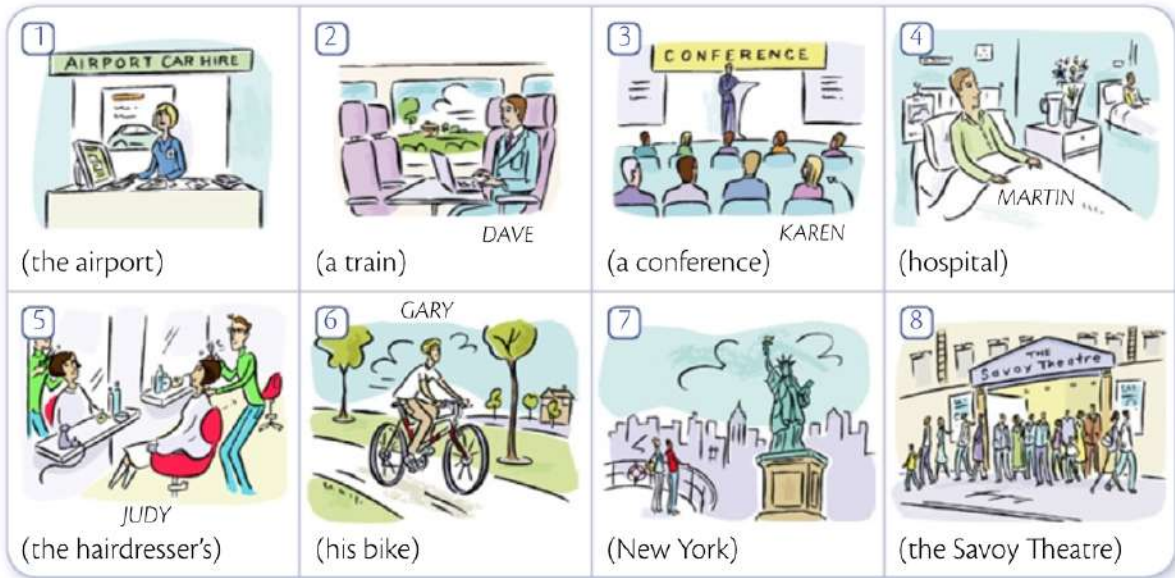
We usually say **on a bus / on a train / on a plane / on a ship** *but* **in a car / in a taxi**:

- The bus** was very full. There were too many people **on it**.  
 Laura arrived **in a taxi**.

We say **on a bike** (= bicycle) / **on a motorbike** / **on a horse**:

- Jane passed me **on her bike**.

**125.1** Complete the sentences about the pictures. Use **in**, **at** or **on** with the words below the pictures.



- 1 You can hire a car at the airport.
- 2 Dave is .....
- 3 Karen is .....
- 4 Martin is .....
- 5 Judy is .....
- 6 I saw Gary .....
- 7 We spent a few days .....
- 8 We went to a show .....

**125.2** Complete the sentences. Use **in**, **at** or **on** + the following:

**the plane**      **hospital**      **a taxi**      ~~**the station**~~      **the cinema**  
**Tokyo**      **school**      **prison**      **the airport**      **the sports centre**

- 1 My train arrives at 11.30. Can you meet me at the station ?
- 2 We walked to the restaurant, but we went home .....
- 3 I'd like to see a film. What's on ..... this week?
- 4 Some people are ..... for crimes that they did not commit.
- 5 'What does your sister do? Does she have a job?' 'No, she's still .....
- 6 I play basketball ..... on Friday evenings.
- 7 A friend of mine was injured in an accident a few days ago. She's still .....
- 8 Our flight was delayed. We had to wait ..... for four hours.
- 9 I enjoyed the flight, but the food ..... wasn't very nice.
- 10 Vicky has gone to Japan. She's living .....

**125.3** Complete these sentences with **in**, **at** or **on**.

- 1 We went to a concert at the National Concert Hall.
- 2 It was a very slow train. It stopped ..... every station.
- 3 My parents live ..... a small village about 50 miles from London.
- 4 I haven't seen Kate for some time. I last saw her ..... David's wedding.
- 5 We stayed ..... a very comfortable hotel when we were ..... Amsterdam.
- 6 There were about fifty rooms ..... the hotel.
- 7 I don't know where my umbrella is. Perhaps I left it ..... the bus.
- 8 'Where were you on Monday evening?' 'I was ..... a friend's house.'
- 9 There must be somebody ..... the house. The lights are on.
- 10 The exhibition ..... the Museum of Modern Art finishes on Saturday.
- 11 Shall we travel ..... your car or mine?
- 12 I didn't expect you to be ..... home. I thought you'd be ..... work.
- 13 'Did you like the movie?' 'Yes, but it was too hot ..... the cinema.'
- 14 Paul lives ..... Birmingham. He's a student ..... Birmingham University.