

At/on/in (time)

A

Compare **at**, **on** and **in**:

- They arrived **at 5 o'clock**.
- They arrived **on Friday**.
- They arrived **in October**. / They arrived **in 1998**.

We use:

at for the time of day

at five o'clock **at 11.45** **at midnight** **at lunchtime** **at sunset** etc.

on for days and dates

on Friday / **on Fridays** **on 16 May 2009** **on Christmas Day** **on my birthday**

in for longer periods (for example: months/years/seasons)

in October **in 1998** **in the 18th century** **in the past**
in (the) winter **in the 1990s** **in the Middle Ages** **in (the) future**

B

We use **at** in these expressions:

- | | |
|--|--|
| at night | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't like working at night . |
| at the weekend / at weekends | <input type="checkbox"/> Will you be here at the weekend ? |
| at Christmas | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you give each other presents at Christmas ? |
| at the moment / at present | <input type="checkbox"/> The manager isn't here at the moment / at present . |
| at the same time | <input type="checkbox"/> Kate and I arrived at the same time . |

C

We say:

- | | | |
|---|------------|--|
| in the morning(s) | <i>but</i> | on Friday morning(s) |
| in the afternoon(s) | | on Sunday afternoon(s) |
| in the evening(s) | | on Monday evening(s) etc. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'll see you in the morning . | | <input type="checkbox"/> I'll see you on Friday morning . |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do you work in the evenings ? | | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you work on Saturday evenings ? |

D

We do not use **at/on/in** before **last/next/this/every**:

- I'll see you **next Friday**. (*not* on next Friday)
- They got married **last March**.

In spoken English we often leave out **on** before days (**Sunday/Monday** etc.). So you can say:

- I'll see you **on Friday**. *or* I'll see you **Friday**.
- I don't work **on Monday mornings**. *or* I don't work **Monday mornings**.

E

In a few minutes / **in six months** etc.

- The train will be leaving **in a few minutes**. (= a few minutes from now)
- Andy has gone away. He'll be back **in a week**. (= a week from now)
- They'll be here **in a moment**. (= a moment from now)

You can also say: in six months' **time**, in a week's **time** etc.

- They're getting married in **six months' time**. *or* ... **in six months**.

We also use **in** ... to say how long it takes to do something:

- I learnt to drive **in four weeks**. (= it took me four weeks to learn)

121.1 Put in **at**, **on** or **in**.

- Mozart was born in Salzburg in 1756.
- I've been invited to a wedding on 14 February.
- Electricity prices are going up in October.
- On weekends, we often go for long walks in the country.
- I haven't seen Kate for a few days. I last saw her on Tuesday.
- Jonathan is 63. He'll be retiring from his job in two years' time.
- I'm busy right now, but I'll be with you in a moment.
- My brother is an engineer, but he doesn't have a job at the moment.
- There are usually a lot of parties on New Year's Eve.
- I don't like driving at night.
- My car is being repaired at the garage. It will be ready in two hours.
- My phone and the doorbell rang at the same time.
- Mary and David always go out for dinner on their wedding anniversary.
- It was a short book and easy to read. I read it in a day.
- On Saturday night I went to bed at midnight.
- We travelled overnight and arrived at 5 o'clock in the morning.
- The course begins on 7 January and ends sometime in April.
- I might not be at home on Tuesday morning, but I'll be there in the afternoon.

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

the evening	about 20 minutes	-1492-	the same time
the moment	21 July 1969	the 1920s	night
Saturdays	the Middle Ages	11 seconds	

- Columbus made his first voyage from Europe to America in 1492.
- If the sky is clear, you can see the stars at night.
- After working hard during the day, I like to relax on Saturdays.
- Neil Armstrong was the first man to walk on the moon on 21 July 1969.
- It's difficult to listen if everyone is speaking at the same time.
- Jazz became popular in the United States in the 1920s.
- I'm just going out to the shop. I'll be back in a moment.
- 'Can I speak to Dan?' 'I'm afraid he's busy at the moment.'
- Many of Europe's great cathedrals were built in the Middle Ages.
- Ben is a very fast runner. He can run 100 metres in about 20 minutes.
- Liz works from Monday to Friday. Sometimes she also works on Saturdays.

121.3 Which is correct: **a**, **b**, or both of them?

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|---|---|-------------|
| 1 a I'll see you on Friday. | b I'll see you Friday. | <u>both</u> |
| 2 a I'll see you on next Friday. | b I'll see you next Friday. | <u>b</u> |
| 3 a Paul got married in April. | b Paul got married April. | |
| 4 a They never go out on Sunday evenings. | b They never go out Sunday evenings. | |
| 5 a We often have a short holiday on Christmas. | b We often have a short holiday at Christmas. | |
| 6 a What are you doing the weekend? | b What are you doing at the weekend? | |
| 7 a Will you be here on Tuesday? | b Will you be here Tuesday? | |
| 8 a We were ill at the same time. | b We were ill in the same time. | |
| 9 a Sue got married at 18 May 2008. | b Sue got married on 18 May 2008. | |
| 10 a He left school last June. | b He left school in last June. | |