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GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

Prepositions

WHEN DO WE USE THEM?

EXPLANATION

- **PREPOSITIONS** are small but important words such as **with, without, on, in, at, for and by**.
- **PREPOSITIONS** are very common. A large number of sentences include **PREPOSITIONS**.
- **IELTS** candidates need to understand **PREPOSITIONS** to succeed in all four components of the test.

WHEN DO WE USE PREPOSITIONS

They are used in prepositional phrases:

- The parents of pupils who do not arrive **at school on time** should be fined. I am **in no doubt** about it!
- **It is with great pleasure** that I write to inform you that your application has been successful.

They are connected with adjectives:

- Most students are **worried/nervous about** exams.
- I wouldn't be **capable of** actually killing an animal and so I am not **willing to** eat one which somebody else has murdered.

WHEN DO WE USE PREPOSITIONS

They are used before pronouns, nouns and -ing forms:

- Although I certainly do not enjoy flying, I wouldn't say I was afraid **of it**.
- It is quite understandable that young children are afraid **of snakes**.
- Many of us refuse to try something new because we are afraid **of failing**.

They can go after nouns:

- There is no **justification for** your behaviour.
- There has been a **fall in** the number of bicycles on our roads.
- The **number of** restaurants in the area has quadrupled.

WHEN DO WE USE PREPOSITIONS

They are often connected with verbs:

- I'll **pop in** to see you on Saturday and **pick up** those books I lent you.
- I can't be bothered to **look up** that word in the dictionary.
- She has been trying to **give up** smoking for decades.

They can tell us about time, place and movement:

- I **got up** at **seven o'clock in the morning**.
- I used to live **in the centre**, just opposite **the train station**.
- We **ran across** **the bridge** and **up** **the hill**.



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GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

Prepositions

PREPOSITIONS AFTER ADJECTIVES

EXPLANATION

- PREPOSITIONS are small but important words such as **with, without, on, in, at, for** and **by**.
- PREPOSITIONS are very common. A large number of sentences include PREPOSITIONS.
- IELTS candidates need to understand PREPOSITIONS to succeed in all four components of the test.
- Many PREPOSITIONS such as **about, at, by for, in, of, to** and **with** can follow certain ADJECTIVES.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING ADJECTIVES

ABOUT

- Experts are **worried/anxious about** the large number of poisonous snakes which have been spotted this year.
- Many older residents become increasingly concerned **about** crime. They are **frightened about** burglars, muggers and murderers.
- Many working in the education sector have become **disappointed/depressed about** the lack of funding for schools.
- Many racists and right-wing politicians are **unhappy/upset about** the large numbers of immigrants entering the country.
- Shoppers are often **pleased/delighted/excited about** the opening of a new department store or shopping mall.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING ADJECTIVES

AT

- I am genuinely **amazed/astounded/astonished/shocked/surprised at** the inhumane attitude which some members of the public have towards refugees - they demand that asylum-seekers are returned to the country they came from, even if it is a war-zone.
- Those who are **skilled/good/talented at** sport seem to have clear advantages in life. I feel that they are treated more favourably.
- Those who are **useless/awful/terrible at** sport are often looked down upon or even laughed at and ridiculed.
- I have always been **bad/atrocious at** doing mental arithmetic.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING ADJECTIVES

BY

- These days, a lot of us are impressed by wealth.
- Many of us are inspired/motivated by the famous people we admire.
- I am quite annoyed/disturbed by those who seem unwilling to make a contribution to society.
- I am amazed/astonished/astounded/shocked/surprised by the fact that so many of my fellow-humans fail to understand the importance of nature and the natural world.
- Lots of experts are seriously concerned/worried by the amount of time children spend staring into a computer screen.
- I am perplexed by the aggressive attitude which many people have.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING ADJECTIVES FOR

- **As far as I am concerned, being brought up in a large family is good/excellent/beneficial for a child's social development.**
- **There is no doubt that cigarette smoking is bad/terrible/disastrous/catastrophic/cataclysmic for a person's health.**
In my view, the companies which knowingly sell this disgusting and addictive product should be prosecuted. They are nothing short of criminals.
- **I am extremely concerned for the future of minority languages.**
- **It is incredibly stressful to do a job in which you are responsible/liable for the safety of others.**
- **Politicians should be held accountable for the mistakes they make.**

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING ADJECTIVES IN

- The number of older people **interested in** taking up extreme sports like parachuting and hang-gliding has rocketed.
- It is easy for us to become **disappointed in** our role models. When we discover that they are not quite as wonderful as we imagined, we can get quite disillusioned.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING ADJECTIVES OF

- Huge numbers of people are **afraid/frightened of** spiders. This phobia has apparently existed in human beings for thousands of years.
- I must admit to being **scared/terrified of** heights. Whenever I have to look down from the top of a high building, I freeze.
- Participants need to be **aware of** the risks involved in extreme activities such as parachuting, caving, deep-sea diving and hang-gliding. Many are **unaware of** the dangers involved.

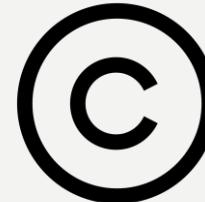
PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING ADJECTIVES

TO

- All religions focus on the need to be **kind/good to others**.
- We should be **helpful/generous to those who are less fortunate than we are**.
- Those who are **cruel/mean to others** do not deserve any respect or sympathy.
- Sometimes people are **nasty/unkind to their fellow-humans** because they themselves have suffered.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING ADJECTIVES WITH

- The world is full of empty-headed, shallow individuals who are obsessed **with** celebrities and shopping.
- I am fed up / bored **with** watching poor-quality television programmes which appeal to the lowest common denominator.
- I am concerned/disappointed/annoyed/dissatisfied **with** the level of political debate these days. Politicians just use 'sound bites', and the public seems not to care.
- I am rather impressed/pleased/delighted **with** the fact that so many school-children actually use the internet to carry out research.

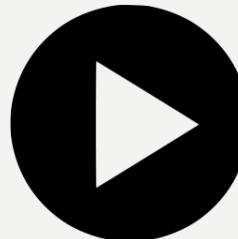


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Prepositions

PREPOSITIONS AFTER NOUNS

EXPLANATION

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PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING NOUNS

ABOUT

- Most of us believe we know **something about** our country's history but, in actual fact, the majority of citizens are ignorant and don't know **anything/much about** what happened in previous centuries.
- Parents who know **nothing about** social media find it difficult to advise their children **about the dangers** facing them online.
- Despite the fact that thousands of telescopes point at the night sky, gathering data and information, we will probably never understand **everything about** the formation of our universe.
- Anyone considering re-locating to another country will need to gather a great deal of **information about** job opportunities, the culture and even the climate, before finally making a decision.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING NOUNS FOR

- The most plausible **explanation for** the sightings of so many Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) is that watchers of the night sky mistake military aircraft or even the planets Venus and Mercury for an alien spaceship.
- Top footballers, basketball players and baseball stars are role models for millions of children. There is no **excuse for** their poor behaviour and no **justification for** acting in this way. If they are caught on camera drinking excessively, speeding or fighting, their fans will be hugely disappointed.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING NOUNS FOR

- There are many **reasons for** juveniles committing offences. We cannot possibly tackle youth crime unless we understand the causes.
- It is widely believed that scientists are more analytical and less imaginative than artists. However, there is no real **evidence for** this.
- Although some worry about the fact that children spend so much time on social media, I believe there is no **cause for** concern.
- All humans have a basic and deep-rooted **need for** love and affection.
- We all need to take **responsibility for** our own actions. It is pointless and immature to blame others.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING NOUNS IN

- There has been a significant drop/fall/decrease/decline in the number of cars sold in the last three months.
- There has been a definite downturn/reduction in newspaper sales of late.
- Between 1980 and 1990 there was a huge rise/increase/growth/improvement in manufacturing exports.
- A surge/upturn in the number of people going to the cinema has been noted recently.
- Over the period in question, there were significant variations/changes/fluctuations in the number of patients reporting chronic illness.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING NOUNS OF

- The **number/quantity/amount/proportion/percentage of** adolescents with jobs has risen this month.
- There was a **high/low/peak of** around thirteen million.
- Only a **third/quarter/fifth of** respondents said they agreed.
- **Approximately twelve/eighteen percent of** crimes are actually solved.
- Although parents and teachers sometimes suggest a career in the military to school-leavers, there is often a **lack of** interest in joining the army. There is currently a **scarcity of** recruits.
- The **production of** a surplus / an **excess of** goods can lead to a **loss of** income for a company.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING NOUNS OF

- The **experience of** living in a foreign country often broadens the mind.
- An **understanding/awareness of** basic laws of physics is incredibly useful; all primary-school pupils should be taught about the fundamental principles which govern our world.
- **Knowledge of** foreign languages can be a tremendous asset for anyone applying for a job.
- The **importance of** good manners should not be underestimated.
- The **significance/relevance of** the new law has not yet become clear to many drivers.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING NOUNS

ON

- Our diet certainly has a major **effect on** mood. Those who eat a range of nutritious foodstuffs are far more likely to be emotionally stable and less likely to become angry or bad-tempered.
- It has been suggested that how wealthy we are may have an **impact on** our self-esteem: those with more money tend to be respected by others and this, it is claimed, can lead them to have a higher opinion of themselves.
- There is little doubt that television has a significant **influence on** the viewer. Studies have suggested that adolescents who watch programmes containing violence are far more likely to engage in violent or aggressive acts themselves.



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- Many PREPOSITIONS such as **about, between, for, from, on, to, with** and **out** can follow certain VERBS.
- Some PREPOSITIONS such as **on, before, after** and **while** can go before VERBS.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING VERBS

ABOUT

- Many of us **think about** the future with a mixture of hope and concern.
- It is quite natural to **worry about** getting older.
- We should aim to ensure that our children **know** as much **about** other cultures as possible.
- We should all try to **learn about** ancient civilisations; they can teach us so much.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING VERBS

ABOUT

- It seems that the number of younger adults who **care about** their physical appearance is higher than it has ever been. This is perhaps a symptom of the so-called 'Facebook generation'.
- Many city-dwellers **complain about** noise, congestion and pollution.
- Scientists regularly **warn about** the possibility that increasingly intelligent computers could actually take over the world.
- I genuinely **wonder about** the merits of art galleries, museums and exhibition centres.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING VERBS BETWEEN

- As technology develops, it may one day become almost impossible to **differentiate/distinguish between** computers with human characteristics and humans who have been fitted with electronic devices to enhance intelligence.
- School-leavers often have to **choose between** going on to higher education or looking for a job.
- Those living in impoverished regions often have to **decide between** struggling on at home and seeking a better life in a large city.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING VERBS FOR

- It is extremely difficult to **forgive** newspapers and websites **for** printing stories which they know not to be true. Although the writers and editors concerned sometimes **apologise for** what they have done, I am not usually convinced that this apology is heartfelt.
- Footballers, tennis players and basketball stars often **look for** excuses when they have lost, instead of taking personal responsibility.
- Lonely individuals often spend thousands of dollars **searching for** the ideal partner on internet dating websites.
- These days, **applying for** a job can be a complicated process, with interviews, personality tests and group assessments involved.
- In the healthiest societies, people **care for** each other.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING VERBS FROM

- It is worrying that, in the modern world, a far greater proportion of us **suffer from** allergies. In the past, fewer people struggled with this kind of condition.
- It is vital that we **learn from** our mistakes.
- In some countries, the authorities have the right to **stop/prevent/forbid/impede** citizens **from** travelling abroad, even if these individuals have not been convicted of any crime.
- Parents sometimes **dissuade/discourage** their children **from** going to university straight after leaving school.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING VERBS

ON

- During the period under discussion, the number of couples getting married **kept/carried on** rising.
- The amount of wine bought **went on** rising until 2011, when it reached its peak.
- After a successful career in business, he **went on** to become leader of a major political party.
- Many parents need to get a job in order to provide their children with a decent standard of living; some of them **rely/depend on** their own relatives to look after the children while they are at work. These adults are very lucky that they can **count on** support from family members.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING VERBS

ON

- There is a debate about whether university courses ought to help undergraduates to **focus/concentrate on** one specific subject area or, alternatively, whether they should enable learners to gain a broader understanding.
- I believe that we should **insist on** motorcyclists wearing helmets to protect them if they crash.
- I need to **work on** my ability to communicate.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING VERBS TO

- On completing their university courses, many graduates **aim/intend/try/plan/decide to** find a well-paid job and **hope/want to** begin a successful career.
- I **wish to complain to** the manager.
- Humans often find it extraordinarily difficult to **apologise to** those they have offended.
- The most competent teachers **explain to** their students why the things they are learning are relevant to their lives.
- Working can be extremely hard and most of us **look forward to** the end of the day, the end of the month, or even retirement.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING VERBS WITH

- It is essential that we **deal with** the obesity crisis now; we cannot afford to allow another generation to grow up overweight.
- I entirely **agree with** the policy of allowing young children to spend as much time as possible playing.
- I have always completely **disagreed with** corporal punishment. Smacking or beating children just because they have made a mistake seems utterly preposterous and counterproductive.
- Children quite often **argue with** their parents about all kinds of issues.
- International bodies must learn to **co-operate/work with** one another.

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING VERBS

OUT

- There is no point just punishing students who behave badly in class. We need to **work out** why they are not paying attention to the teacher, and help them. (**To work out** = to think carefully and in detail about an issue or question, until you understand it or find the answer. We can also use this verb to mean **to calculate**)
- If I ever **find out** who stole my bicycle, I'll give them a piece of my mind. (**To find out** = to discover after searching or investigating)

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING VERBS

OUT

- People who depend on state benefits often **run out** of money and have to borrow from friends, or simply do without necessities like food and heating. (**To run out of** = to have less and less of something and eventually to not have any remaining/left)
- It is worth **pointing out** that although coffee production rose during the period, the price which growers received for their produce fell. (**To point out** = to tell a fact or piece of information; to indicate that a piece of information is important and relevant)

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING VERBS

OUT

- If you make mistakes when **filling out** an application form for a new job, you are very unlikely to be offered an interview. (**To fill out** = to complete a form. The verb **to fill in** has a very similar meaning)
- Some children decide not to work hard at school. Teachers need to **spell out** the consequences of this laziness: the students concerned are unlikely to get a well-paid job or to have a successful career unless they change their attitude. (**To spell out** = to clearly explain something which people may not have fully understood before. We often **spell out** options, plans, consequences etc.)
-

PREPOSITIONS FOLLOWING VERBS

OUT

- The table shows that fast food generally became more popular over the period. The figure which really **stands out** is for hamburgers: the number eaten more than quadrupled during the eight years under discussion. (**To stand out** = to clearly be the most important, the most relevant or the most eye-catching)
- When a plane crashes, it is important that an investigation into the accident is **carried out**. It is essential that the reasons for the crash are understood so that a similar situation can be prevented in the future. (**To carry out** = to do or complete something such as an order, a piece of research, an investigation, a threat or a plan)

PREPOSITIONS BEFORE VERBS

- **On entering** the building, I was given a security badge. (**On entering...** = **when I entered...** or **as soon as I entered...**)
- **On being told** that no guarantee was available, I decided not to go ahead with the purchase. (**Being** is a passive form here. **We could write When they told me that no guarantee was available...**)
- **Before paying**, I asked for a written receipt and guarantee.
- **After having** breakfast, I usually do a couple of hours of work.
- **After having considered** the matter in detail, I have reached the conclusion that children should wear uniforms at school. (**We could also write After considering the matter in detail,...**)
- **While working** in America, I managed to earn a substantial amount.



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SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS: BY

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- PREPOSITIONS are very common. A large number of sentences include PREPOSITIONS.
- IELTS candidates need to understand PREPOSITIONS to succeed in all four components of the test.
- The PREPOSITION **by** is useful and versatile. It can be used with **forms of transport**, to refer to a **specific time point**, to refer to **passive forms**, to write about **changes**, to indicate **how something is done**.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS

BY

- **Commuters who travel **by bus** are more likely to arrive late for work than those who choose to go **by train.** (**by** explains which form of transport is used)**
- **By the end of the period, the amount of fruit exported had gone down considerably.**
- **By the middle of the 21st century, it is likely that all of the summertime polar ice will have melted. (**by** can be used with a point in future/past time when we want to describe what finished or what will finish before this point)**
- **Individuals accused of hacking into government websites often claim to have done it **by accident** rather than on purpose. (**by accident** = without intention; without meaning to do something)**

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS

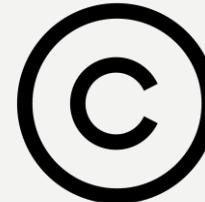
BY

- **Gifted children should be coached by professional musicians.**
- **A game similar to football was played by ancient civilisations in Asia and Central America. (by can introduce the original subject of a verb in a passive sentence)**
- **Levels of obesity are likely to rise by approximately twenty percent between now and the end of the decade.**
- **The number of criminals found guilty of both violent and non-violent crimes has gone up by around a third since 1990. (by can indicate how much something changes)**
- **It is by no means easy to get a place at one of the most prestigious universities. (by no means = not at all; in no way)**

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS

BY

- **By discussing** the matter calmly, we can usually reach a sensible compromise.
- **By making** the law tougher, the authorities could certainly reduce anti-social behaviour.
- We could certainly start to improve society **by teaching** critical thinking skills to teenagers.
- The substance is made **by pouring** cold water over the chemicals.
- Students can give themselves a much better chance of passing their exams **by working** hard. (**by + -ing** describes how something is done or the method/process which is used to achieve something)



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- The PREPOSITION **of** is useful. It can be used to refer to **quantity**, to **possession**, when something is **contained**, when things are **connected**, to describe **position**, with **adjectives** and in **set expressions**.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS OF

We can use **of** in expressions connected to quantity and amount:

- **Nearly all of the students who graduate from top universities manage to find a well-paid job within a very short period of time.**
- **Most of the young adults who the army recruits are looking for a life of adventure and challenge.**
- **I agree with some of the arguments put forward in favour of private education.**
- **A few of the points advanced by the proponents of nuclear disarmament are, quite frankly, nonsensical.**
- **None of the tourists who visit exotic locations really care about those who actually have to live there.**

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS OF

We can use **of** in expressions connected to quantity and amount:

- We have lost a great deal of time and a significant amount of money.
- Youngsters have loads of opportunities these days.
- A significant proportion/percentage of the adult population has given up smoking during the last twenty years.
- Quite a lot of us can now afford a foreign holiday.
- A reasonable amount of money has been donated to the charity.
- A small minority of people cannot read and write properly.
- We just need a tiny bit of luck.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS OF

We can use **of** to express possession, type, belonging or origin:

- He is a good **friend of mine**. But certainly not a **friend of yours**.
- I hugely respect **the wisdom of older people** and **the enthusiasm of the young**.
- The **type of car** you drive and the **sort/kind of clothes** you wear shouldn't make a difference to what others think about you.
- Even **the leader of the country** is not above the law.
- **The King of Norway** impressed his nation by giving a very enlightened speech.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS OF

We can use **of** to indicate that something is contained in something else:

- I needed **a box of biscuits** and **a cup of tea**.
- **Anyone who smokes more than a packet of cigarettes a day** is at serious risk of developing major health problems.
- **Thousands of bottles of whisky** are illegally smuggled into the country each year.
- It is said that **groups of male students** do better academically than classes containing both boys and girls.
- **Books of poetry** do not generally sell as well as **books of stories for children**.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS OF

We use **of** to show that something is connected to something else:

- There are several **advantages of living alone**.
- The **causes of homelessness** are numerous and complex.
- We should not underestimate the **difficulty of bringing up children**.
- The **skill of negotiating** is an important one in the **world of business**.
- We need children to be aware of the **importance of staying safe online**.
- I don't really understand the **point/purpose of demonstrating** in the streets. It never seems to work.
- We need to inspire students with a **love of learning** and make sure that they do not have a **fear of failure**.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS OF

We can use **of** in expressions showing position:

- You should be able to recognise him. He has a huge scar on **the side of his face** and another one on **the top of his head**.
- Let's meet on **the corner of the street**, unless it's raining.
- Living at **the top of a block of flats** has its advantages.
- We have been painting **the front of our house** blue and **the sides of our house** green. It looks awful!
- Students who hate science often sit at **the back of the class** and those that love it often sit at **the front of the class**.
- Some people push in at **the front of the queue** instead of joining **the back of the queue**.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS OF

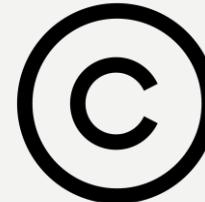
We can use **of** to connect adjectives with nouns/noun phrases:

- Some people are **scared of the dark, of heights or of spiders.**
- I am quite **tired of having to listen to his excuses.**
- She has always been **wary of dogs.** One bit her when she was young.
- He seems **scared of making a commitment.**
- It is important to be **sure of yourself.**
- Some students leave college because they have got **bored of sitting in a classroom all day.**
- We are all **weary of poor economic conditions.**
- Lots of us are **fond of ice-cream.**

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS OF

We can use **of** in some useful set expressions:

- The **standard of living** may have risen but the **quality of life** has certainly diminished.
- It is often argued that **freedom of speech** is a basic human right and that **the freedom of the press** is an essential component of it.
- Going to that lecture was **a waste of time and money**.
- Technology has fundamentally changed our **way of life**.
- The **peace of mind** we seek is often hard to find.
- It was **a stroke of genius/luck** to bring the torch.



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- The PREPOSITION **in** is useful and versatile. It can be used in a wide range of **complex phrases**.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS IN

- Some patients **in pain** use meditation to ease their suffering.
- After falling down on the ice and twisting my ankle, I was **in agony**. I started screaming and crying.
- When a company borrows money and does not generate enough profit to pay it back, it is **in danger** of going bankrupt.
- Teenagers who are **in trouble** need support, not punishment. If an adolescent breaks the law or becomes addicted to drugs, she or he requires help rather than being thrown in prison.
- Many living in refugee camps are **in peril**.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS IN

- **It is disgraceful that millions live *in poverty*, lacking basic necessities such as clean drinking water and adequate shelter.**
- **Those living in a war-zone are constantly *in fear*.**
- **Due to high levels of unemployment, many individuals find themselves *in debt* through no fault of their own. They have to borrow money to pay bills and are then unable to re-pay the loan.**
- ***In public*, many celebrities such as actors and singers seem blissfully happy. However, *in private*, some of them are actually struggling with addiction, depression or anxiety.**
- **Many struggle to feed their children. *In (actual) fact*, a recent report has suggested that around a tenth of all children go hungry.**

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS IN

- Those who can predict how people behave find themselves **in demand**.
- The importance of foreign languages is **in decline**.
- An experiment has suggested that adults who are **in love** are far more likely to donate money to charities than those who are not.
- In the city, economic prosperity is not much **in evidence**.
- **In comparison** with economic growth figures for China, those for most European countries seem weak.
- The figures suggest that **in excess of** a million migrants applied for the permanent right to remain in the country.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS IN

- Lots of us are **in denial** about the seriousness of the situation.
- You should take your umbrella **in case** it rains.
- The statistical information **in question** indicates that the popularity of frozen food rose, whilst that of fresh food fell slightly.
- **In conclusion/summary**, it seems reasonable to suggest that the drawbacks of capital punishment outweigh any benefits.
- Temperatures **in spring** were unusually high. **In contrast**, last autumn saw some of the coldest days on record.
- Most building companies ask customers to pay part of the bill **in advance**, and the remainder when work has been completed.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS IN

- **In an effort to reduce pollution, some local councils have agreed to ban cars which use diesel and petrol from city-centres.**
- **In most cases, those who bully others have had traumatic experiences themselves.**
- **I am generally in favour of making it compulsory for everyone to vote in elections.**
- **In terms of money, I was better off in my previous job.**
- **In the short/medium/long term, living conditions will improve.**
- **In the event of a nuclear war, we would all die.**
- **In view of what has happened, I have decided to resign.**

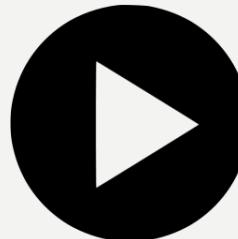


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GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

Prepositions

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS: ON

EXPLANATION

- PREPOSITIONS are small but important words such as **with, without, on, in, at, for** and **by**.
- PREPOSITIONS are very common. A large number of sentences include PREPOSITIONS.
- IELTS candidates need to understand PREPOSITIONS to succeed in all four components of the test.
- The PREPOSITION **on** is useful and versatile. It can be used in a wide range of **complex phrases**.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS ON

- If someone hurts another person **on purpose**, he or she might end up in prison. However, if the injury is caused by accident, it does not seem fair to send the individual responsible to jail. (**on purpose** = intentionally; not by accident)
- I am writing **on behalf of** the company, to invite you to attend a seminar on 13th February in our offices. (**on behalf of** = representing. This phrase is used to show that you are not speaking, writing or acting only for yourself. You are representing an individual, group or organisation. This phrase is often used in a formal letter)
- Some people never travel abroad, **on account of** their fear of flying. (**on account of** = because of; as a result of)

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS

ON

- The table shows that, **on average**, house prices rose by approximately a third during the period in question. (**on average** = the number you get if you add two or more things/numbers together and divide the total by the number of things you added)
- I have considered the arguments related to the use of school uniforms and, **on balance**, I believe that it makes sense for educational establishments to allow their pupils to wear whatever they want. (**on balance** = after carefully or fully considering both sides of an argument. This phrase is used to introduce the opinion you reach after examining both sides of a debate)
- **On the whole**, people are willing to help each other. (**on the whole** = generally; on most occasions; in most situations)

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS ON

- The popularity of far-right political parties is **on the rise/increase**. (**on the rise/increase** = **in the process of rising/increasing; becoming more popular or more common**)
- We could be **on the verge** of a global economic crisis. (**on the verge** = **about to happen; be going to happen very soon**)
- The people I went to the theatre with thought the play was fantastic but I, **on the contrary**, found it tedious and boring. (**on the contrary** = **showing that you think/feel the opposite of what has just been said/stated**)
- All of the students are **on course** to pass the exam (**on course** = **making good progress; going in the right direction**)

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS ON

- Some doctors are **on duty** for periods in excess of twelve hours. (**on duty** = **doing a particular job which involves responsibilities**)
- He has been a bit **on edge** lately. (**on edge** = **nervous; struggling to keep control of your temper/emotions**)
- If more people went to the shops **on foot**, it would be beneficial for the environment. (**on foot** = **walking**)
- We should be **on our guard** against complacency. (**on your guard** = **aware that a situation might be dangerous**)
- **On no account** should young children be allowed to watch movies containing violent scenes. (**on no account** = **under no circumstances**)

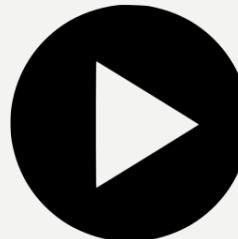


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GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

Prepositions

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS: UNDER

EXPLANATION

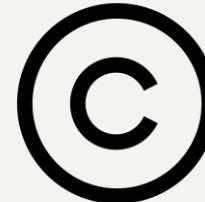
- PREPOSITIONS are small but important words such as **with, without, on, in, at, for** and **under**.
- PREPOSITIONS are very common. A large number of sentences include PREPOSITIONS.
- IELTS candidates need to understand PREPOSITIONS to succeed in all four components of the test.
- The PREPOSITION **under** is useful and versatile. It can be used in several **complex phrases**.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS UNDER

- The statistical information **under discussion** indicates that there is a correlation between obesity and diabetes.
- I was **under the impression** that you had been working here for ages.
- When motorists cause fatal accidents because they are **under the influence of drink or drugs**, they should face severe punishment.
- In some countries, if a person is **under suspicion** of murder, police-officers have the right to hold him or her for up to three days before deciding whether to bring charges.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS UNDER

- If you buy something from a store, the retailer is **under no obligation** to give you a refund if you have lost your receipt.
- I feel **under an obligation** to work harder than everyone else. The boss is my uncle and everyone thinks that's why he gave me the job.
- Those in power like to give the impression that everything is **under control**, even when it isn't.
- Some people work well **under pressure**, whilst others perform badly.
- We should be **under no illusions** about the aim of cyber-terrorists. They seek to weaken and undermine the state.
- There is a great deal of debate about how the law should deal with children who drink whilst **under age**.



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GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

Prepositions

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS: WITH

EXPLANATION

- PREPOSITIONS are small but important words such as **with, without, on, in, at, for** and **by**.
- PREPOSITIONS are very common. A large number of sentences include PREPOSITIONS.
- IELTS candidates need to understand PREPOSITIONS to succeed in all four components of the test.
- The PREPOSITION **with** is useful and versatile. It can often be used with a NOUN to replace an ADVERB.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS WITH

We can use **with/without + noun** as an adverbial structure to refer to how easy or how difficult something is:

- Some students seem to pass exams **with ease**, whereas others struggle.
- Some students learn languages **with no difficulty** whatsoever.
- Some people seem to go through life **without difficulty/stress**.
- I can stay up all night **without much effort**.
- I'm afraid I can only read your hand-writing **with great difficulty**.
- I only managed to complete my work **with considerable difficulty**.
- I can only understand mathematics **with a great deal of effort**.

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS WITH

We can use with + noun as an adverbial structure to refer to strong feelings:

- **Members of the public often react with a certain amount of disbelief and scepticism to politicians' promises.**
- **Many passengers board their flights with a degree of anxiety, apprehension and even fear. They cannot avoid thinking about the possibility that their plane will crash.**
- **Many of us would react with disgust and horror if we saw how the animals we eat are actually slaughtered.**
- **Those of us who love our countries usually sing our national anthems with immense pride.**

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS WITH

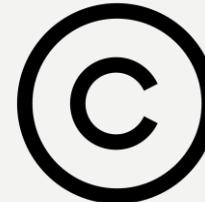
We can use **with** + noun as an adverbial structure to refer to strong feelings:

- **It is with great pleasure that I write to offer you the position of Marketing Manager.** (from IELTS General Writing Task 1: formal letter)
- **It is with sadness that I am writing to inform you of my decision to leave the company.** (from IELTS General Writing Task 1: formal letter)
- **I must admit that it was with very mixed feelings that I handed in my resignation letter.**

SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS WITH

With is often used with the verb to treat:

- Teachers need to **treat** their pupils **with** patience.
- It is important to **treat** our pets **with** love and respect.
- We should **treat** claims that the world will end soon **with** a huge amount of **caution/scepticism**. They are probably based on guesswork rather than scientific evidence.
- I am afraid I sometimes **treat** people **with** disdain.



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GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

Prepositions

PREPOSITIONS OF TIME

EXPLANATION

- PREPOSITIONS are small but important words such as **with, without, on, in, at, for** and **by**.
- PREPOSITIONS are very common. A large number of sentences include PREPOSITIONS.
- IELTS candidates need to understand PREPOSITIONS to succeed in all four components of the test.
- PREPOSITIONS are extremely useful in **time expressions**.

PREPOSITIONS OF TIME

in the morning; in the afternoon; in the evening; at night:

- The figures indicate that, **in the morning**, electricity usage tends to be higher than **in the afternoon**. It rises **in the early evening** before falling back to negligible levels **at night**.

in January; in July; in September:

- Surprisingly, the figures reveal that ice-cream sales are higher **in July** than they are **in August**.

at seven o'clock; at half past eight; at ten to nine:

- Many commuters leave their homes **at around half past seven in the morning**, only returning **at eight o'clock in the evening, or later**.

PREPOSITIONS OF TIME

on Saturday; on Tuesdays; on weekdays:

- **On Saturdays and Sundays I usually have a lie in, because on weekdays I have to get up at the crack of dawn.**

at/on the weekend:

- **More people now work at the weekend than ever before.**

at (the crack of) dawn; at dusk:

- **Although it takes time to get used to waking up at the crack of dawn and still being outside at dusk, this is normal for farmers.**

PREPOSITIONS OF TIME

at the beginning; in the middle; at the end:

- **At the beginning of the week, I'm usually full of beans. In/By the middle of the week, I'm often flagging a bit and at/by the end of the week, I'm usually out on my feet.**

in 2012; in the year 1985; in the 1990s:

- **Obesity levels in 2026 are predicted to be much higher than they were in the 1990s.**
- **In 2008, The Olympic Games took place in Beijing. The event was acclaimed as a great success. In the year 2012, London was the venue. Once more, everything ran relatively smoothly.**

PREPOSITIONS OF TIME

in the seventeenth century; in the twenty-first century:

- It would be hard to have lived **in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries.**

in two years' time; in three months' time; in a week's time:

- I am hoping to move to Seattle **in two years' time.**
- **In three weeks' time we will be sunning ourselves on the beach. I can't wait!**

in the past; at present; in the future:

- **In the past**, societies tended to be more collectivist. **At present**, there is a tendency towards individualism. It is difficult to predict what will happen **in the future.**

PREPOSITIONS OF TIME

for several months; for a number of years; for ages:

- I have been studying English **for several years**.
- When at school, I played the violin **for around six years**.

since the beginning of the twentieth century; since yesterday; since time immemorial:

- **Since the moment when the first nuclear weapon was tested, our lives have been different.**
- **The number of fast-food outlets in the city has doubled since 2002.**
- **Since time immemorial, humans have argued about the best ways to deal with criminals and those who behave anti-socially.**

PREPOSITIONS OF TIME

throughout the entire period; throughout the night:

- Wind was blowing **throughout the entire day**. It never stopped.
- The museum is open **throughout the year**.

over time; over the summer; over the years:

- It is amazing to see how the business has grown **over time**.
- We read lots of interesting books **over the summer**.
- **Over the years**, I have learnt how to prioritise important things.

during the night; during the 1990s; during my time in Dublin:

- We were burgled **during the night**.
- **During my time in Dublin**, I went to dance classes.

PREPOSITIONS OF TIME

from dawn until/till dusk; from morning until/till evening; from June until/till August:

- **During summer, farmers often work from dawn till dusk.**
- **From June until the following January, car sales were negligible.**

by 2002; by the end of the period; by next May:

- **By the year 2000, there had been a slight rise in the number of confirmed cases of measles.**
- **By the end of the period under discussion, sales had quadrupled.**
- **It is predicted that by this time next year, the amount of electricity produced using renewable resources will have overtaken the corresponding level for non-renewable energy.**



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GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

Prepositions FOR TRANSPORT

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EXPLANATION

- PREPOSITIONS are small but important words such as **with, without, on, in, at, for** and **by**.
- PREPOSITIONS are very common. A large number of sentences include PREPOSITIONS.
- IELTS candidates need to understand PREPOSITIONS to succeed in all four components of the test.
- PREPOSITIONS are extremely useful to describe entering, using and leaving **forms of transport**.

PREPOSITIONS OF TRANSPORT

For the following forms of transport we use **on**:

- a **train**; a **bus**; a **tram**; a **coach**; a **plane**; a **helicopter**; a **bicycle**; a **bike**; a **motorbike**; a **scooter**; a **horse**; a **camel**; a **boat**; a **ship**; a **yacht**; a **submarine**

It is possible to use **in** with some of these forms of transport if a) they have a ceiling which covers you and b) you are not describing your journey:

- I was already **in the plane** and the reception on my phone was terrible.
- I sat **in the bus** because it was raining.

PREPOSITIONS OF TRANSPORT

For the following forms of transport we use **in**:

- a car; a taxi; a truck; a lorry; a balloon; a canoe; a lift / an elevator

Remember to use **on** when you write or speak about a journey/trip:

- I hate going **on long car journeys**. I always feel sick.
- I would love to go **on a round-the-world trip/cruise**.

PREPOSITIONS OF TRANSPORT

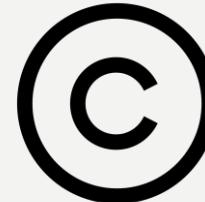
The structure **to get + preposition** is very useful to explain entering or leaving a **car, bus, train, plane etc.** When we use **on** to describe our location, we can use **get on/onto** and **get off**. We can also use other verbs of movement:

- When I **got off the plane**, my legs felt weak.
- You shouldn't **get on the bus** without a ticket. If you can't pay, the driver will ask you to **get off** again.
- I **got/hopped on the tram** in the city-centre but fell asleep and didn't **get off** until the driver woke me up at the terminal.
- Instead of getting into your **car** and driving to work, **get/jump on your bike** and cycle. It will make you feel better.

PREPOSITIONS OF TRANSPORT

When we use **in** to describe our location, we can use **get in** and **get out** (or **get into** and **get out of** if we add the name of the form of transport). We can also use other verbs of movement:

- They **got/jumped into the car** and drove away at top speed.
- I was too scared to **get/climb into the canoe**. I thought I would **fall out** and drown.
- When you **get out of the lorry**, make sure you lock the door properly.
- If I got stuck in a **lift / an elevator**, I would scream until somebody helped me to **get out**.



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GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

Prepositions

PREPOSITIONS OF PLACE (part 1)

EXPLANATION

- **PREPOSITIONS** are small but important words such as **with, without, on, in, at, for** and **by**.
- **PREPOSITIONS** are very common. A large number of sentences include **PREPOSITIONS**.
- IELTS candidates need to understand **PREPOSITIONS** to succeed in all four components of the test.
- **PREPOSITIONS OF PLACE** confuse many IELTS candidates. Using **in, to, at, on, over, above, under** and **below** correctly will impress the examiner.

PREPOSITIONS OF PLACE

It is important to understand when to use **in**, **at**, **on** and **to**:

- **We met *in* London / Vietnam / the restaurant** (inside; surrounded by)
- **We were *in* the car / the supermarket / the temple** (inside; covered by)
- **We were *at* home / school / the embassy / the bank / the temple** (location for a reason: **at the bank = to get money**; **at university = to study**)
- **We were *on* a ship / a skateboard / a beach / the summit of a mountain / a horse** (above; higher than; not covered by)
- **We went *to* London / Vietnam / the restaurant** (movement)

PREPOSITIONS OF MOVEMENT INTO, OUT OF, ONTO AND OFF

We can use into and out of, onto and off for movement:

- I went **into the room** but it was completely empty.
- We drove **into London**. It took ages because of the congestion.
- I had to get **out of the office**. I had such a headache.
- I cycled **out of town**.
- I walked **onto the beach**. It was entirely deserted.
- He jumped **onto the stage** and started singing.
- The guide told us to get **off the mountain** straightaway as avalanches had been reported.
- I was very keen to get **off the horse**. I didn't feel safe.

OTHER PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS OF PLACE

OVER/ABOVE

We can use **above** and **over** to mean higher than:

- I don't like firework displays. I feel uncomfortable with fireworks exploding **above/over** my head.
- There is a crack in the wall **above/over** the window.
- You should recognise him because he has a huge scar **above/over** his right eye.
- It is quite a noisy flat. It's **right above / right over** a bar.
- It felt amazing flying **above/over** the city and looking down at all the tiny people below. (We can use **above/over** for movement)

OTHER PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS OF PLACE

ABOVE

Above can mean more than in amount/level:

- Average temperatures rose **above** zero for the first time last December.
- Anyone aged **above** twelve is, as far as I am concerned, entirely responsible for their own actions.

Above can also mean higher than or more important than:

- Nobody can be **above** the law or **above** suspicion, not even the President.
- **Above** all, I would like to thank my family and friends.

OTHER PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS OF PLACE

OVER

We can use **over** to mean **covering**:

- I stuck a notice on the door but somebody put another piece of paper **over** it.
- The government's policy amounts to nothing more than papering **over** the cracks. The underlying problems will not go away.

We can use **over** to mean **across; on the other side of**:

- You will need to go **over** the river. The offices are **on the other side**.
- You will never get **over** that road. It is so busy!
- Refugees have to make the dangerous journey **over** the mountains before reaching safety.

OTHER PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS OF PLACE

OVER / ALL OVER

We can use **over** to mean more than:

- Over twenty percent of those who responded admitted to having lied on a job application.
- It is said that over a third of all home-owners are in debt.

We can use **all over** to mean in all places/parts:

- All over the world, demonstrators have gone on to the streets to protest about inequality and injustice.
- Gossip and malicious rumours can be found all over the internet.
- All over the country, people were glued to their television sets during the match.

OTHER PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS OF PLACE

UNDER

We can use **below** and **under** to mean lower than. We usually use **under** when there is contact between two things:

- Doctors and nurses sometimes take patients' temperature by putting a thermometer **under** the tongue/armpit.
- When scientists put hydrophones **under** the water, they can hear the intricate ways in which whales communicate.
- Shops sometimes sell things which they shouldn't '**under** the counter'.
- Our dog usually sits **under** the table at mealtimes.

OTHER PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS OF PLACE

BELow

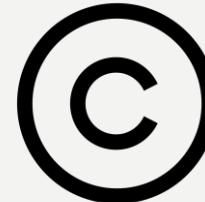
We can use **below** and **under** to mean lower than. We usually use **below** when there is no contact:

- I used to live a few hundred metres **below** the summit of a mountain. The views were spectacular.
- I'm incredibly pleased that noisy family lives **below** us rather than **above** us.
- There is a mark on the wall just **below** the window.
- Looking down from such a height, the people and cars **below** us seemed insignificant.
- The sun will sink **below** the horizon at around eight o'clock.

OTHER PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS OF PLACE BELOW

We can also use **below** to mean lower than:

- Your score was just **below** average.
- The temperature in winter is usually **below** zero.
- After ten years, levels of radioactivity had fallen **below** the level which medical experts consider dangerous.
- Children **below** the age of ten should not be allowed to travel alone.
- He has around a hundred people working **below** him in the company.
He seems to love having power and authority.



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GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

Prepositions

PREPOSITIONS OF PLACE (part 2)

EXPLANATION

- **PREPOSITIONS** are small but important words such as **with, without, on, in, at, for** and **by**.
- **PREPOSITIONS** are very common. A large number of sentences include **PREPOSITIONS**.
- IELTS candidates need to understand **PREPOSITIONS** to succeed in all four components of the test.
- **PREPOSITIONS OF PLACE** confuse many IELTS candidates. Using **between, among, in front of, opposite, behind** and **beside** correctly will impress the examiner.

OTHER PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS OF PLACE BETWEEN

We usually use **between** to refer to two things:

- We live **between** a primary school and a nightclub. It's quite noisy most of the time.
- My hometown lies **between** the mountains and the coast.
- The figures give information about the popularity of trains **between** Leeds and Manchester.
- We lived there **between** 1999 and 2002. (We can use **between...** and... to refer to a period of time)
- Germany lies **between** France to the west, Austria and Switzerland to the south and Poland to the east. (We can use **between** with three or more things when we refer to them specifically)

OTHER PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS OF PLACE AMONG

We usually use **among** to refer to three or more things:

- It is nice to be **among** friends.
- Norway was **among** the first countries in the world to offer its older citizens a retirement pension.
- He is undoubtedly **among** the most brilliant scientists who have ever lived.
- China is now **among** the world's richest countries.
- The spread of Ebola is **among** the most worrying public health crises that our planet has faced in recent years.

OTHER PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS OF PLACE IN FRONT OF

We often use **in front of** to describe two people/things which face in the same direction:

- The car **in front of** mine stopped without warning and we drove straight into it.
- The person sitting **in front of** me at the cinema was so tall that I could hardly see the screen.

We often use **in front of** when bigger people/things face smaller people/things:

- If you put a dish of meat **in front of** a dog, the dog will usually eat it.
- She sat there with a book **in front of** her.
- We usually meet **in front of** the school.

OTHER PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS OF PLACE

OPPOSITE

We often use **opposite** to refer to two people/things which face each other:

- I was sitting **opposite** her in the meeting and saw her shocked facial expression when the report was read out.
- Their house is **opposite** ours, so I can see exactly what they're doing most of the time.
- They sat at **opposite** ends of the table, looking at each other.

Opposite can mean completely different:

- We come from **opposite** ends of society.
- I have a diametrically **opposite/opposed** opinion to yours.

OTHER PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS OF PLACE

BEHIND

Behind is often the opposite of **in front of**:

- The man sitting **behind** me at the concert kept eating sweets.
- The person **behind** us in the queue was stopped by customs officials, but luckily they didn't bother us.
- Your car was parked just **behind** mine.
- Our house is just **behind** the football stadium.
- You need to put that bad experience **behind** you as soon as possible.

OTHER PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS OF PLACE BESIDE AND BESIDES

Beside usually means next to:

- We live **beside** the sea.
- The bus station is right **beside** the train station.
- I sat **beside** a famous author at the dinner.

To be beside the point means to be entirely irrelevant:

- You broke the law. The fact that you were tired is **beside the point**.

Besides means in addition to; as well as (that):

- I pay all the bills and, **besides** that, I give each of the children a weekly allowance.
- **Besides** working at the nursery, I run my own online business selling artwork.

OTHER PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS/ADJECTIVES OF PLACE

NEXT TO, NEAR AND NEARBY

We can use **next to**, **near** and **nearby**:

- I used to sit **next to a really clever girl** in maths. She knew all the answers.
- **Nobody wants to live next to a nightclub.**
- **We live near (to) a lake.** It's just a ten-minute drive away.
- I hate living so **near (to) where I work.** I wish I lived further away.
- **We like living in our neighbourhood.** There's a park **nearby / not far away.**
- **When they visited, we took them to several nearby tourist attractions.**

PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS OF MOVEMENT

We can use many different words to describe movement:

- I was walking **toward/towards** the college when I saw her.
- Emergency workers are incredibly brave. They have to run **toward/towards** terrorist incidents when everybody else is running **away from** them.
- We started running **away from** the shop when we heard gun-shots.
- We couldn't see much so we went **closer/nearer**.
- It was noisy so we decided to move **further away**.
- We walked **up** the hill, admired the view and walked back **down** it.

PREPOSITIONS/ADVERBS OF MOVEMENT

We can use many different words to describe movement:

- We were driving **through** a tunnel so phone reception was poor.
- We had to walk **along** the road because our car broke down.
- I had to swim **across** the river as there wasn't a bridge.
- You walked right **past** me. I waved but you didn't see me at all.
- Security guards walk **around** the building every ten minutes.
- We wondered **around** the town for ages.
- I ran **around** the stadium five times.
- We climbed **over** the gate and went into the field.
- Go **over** the road and turn left.
- You should never walk **under** a ladder!



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PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Many verbs are followed by prepositions. Try to complete the following sentences with a preposition:

1. A sizable proportion of those who try to give _____ smoking actually fail.
2. It is difficult to motivate yourself to do physical exercise every single day. However, if you keep _____ reminding yourself how beneficial this type of activity is for your mental, emotional and physical wellbeing, you are more likely to continue.
3. Learning vocabulary in a foreign language can be extremely tricky. Most students fall into the trap of simply looking _____ words online or in dictionaries without bothering to use any strategies to remember them. Obviously, the outcome tends to be that these words are soon forgotten.
4. I look forward _____ hearing from you at your earliest convenience. (in a formal letter)
5. If we all worked _____ how much we spend on unnecessary items each year, most of us would be deeply shocked.
6. It is scandalous that the police do not always look _____ cases of domestic violence.
7. When they have forgotten to do their homework, quite a lot of children make _____ excuses for the teacher. They often claim that their dog ate their exercise book or that a bird flew away with it.
8. We live in an incredibly wasteful society where some of us throw _____ food which is perfectly edible. In a world where there is so much hunger, this behaviour is outrageous and sickening.

ANSWERS

1. A sizable proportion of those who try to give **up** smoking actually fail.
2. It is difficult to motivate yourself to do physical exercise every single day. However, if you keep **on** reminding yourself how beneficial this type of activity is for your mental, emotional and physical wellbeing, you are more likely to continue.
3. Learning vocabulary in a foreign language can be extremely tricky. Most students fall into the trap of simply looking **up** words online or in dictionaries without bothering to use any strategies to remember them. Obviously, the outcome tends to be that these words are soon forgotten.
4. I look forward **to** hearing from you at your earliest convenience. (from a formal letter)
5. If we all worked **out** how much we spend on unnecessary items each year, most of us would be deeply shocked.
6. It is scandalous that the police do not always look **into** cases of domestic violence.
7. When they have forgotten to do their homework, quite a lot of children make **up** excuses for the teacher. They often claim that their dog ate their exercise book or that a bird flew away with it.
8. We live in an incredibly wasteful society where some of us throw **away** food which is perfectly edible. In a world where there is so much hunger, this behaviour is outrageous and sickening.

EXTRA

- **A sizable proportion** = a large number or a large percentage
- **To give up** = to stop doing something that you do regularly and/or enjoy
- **To keep on** = to do something continuously or repeatedly
- **To be tricky** = to be difficult
- **To fall into the trap of...** = to do something easy which seems right but which is actually wrong or bad for you
- **To look up** = to find information in a book, on a website etc.
- **To look forward to something** = to hope and expect that something will happen in the future
- **At your earliest convenience** = as soon as possible (a very formal phrase)
- **To work out** = to calculate
- **To be scandalous** = to be disgraceful or extremely shocking
- **To look into** = to investigate
- **Domestic abuse** = violence or cruelty (physical, emotional, mental etc.) which occurs within the home ('behind closed doors')
- **To make up** = to invent using your imagination (an excuse, a lie, a story etc.)
- **To claim** = to say that something is true even though you do not have evidence to support what you say
- **To be edible** = to be possible to eat
- **To be outrageous** = to be deeply shocking
- **To be sickening** = to be so horrible that it makes you feel ill

PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Try to complete the following sentences with words connected to **in**:

1. It is disgraceful that millions live in **p_____**, lacking basic necessities such as clean drinking water and adequate shelter.
2. We are so addicted to our screens that we are in **da_____** of losing basic interpersonal skills and of becoming entirely self-obsessed.
3. Teenagers who are in **tr_____** need support, not punishment. If an adolescent breaks the law or becomes addicted to drugs, she or he requires help rather than being thrown in prison.
4. Due to high levels of unemployment, many individuals find themselves in **de_____** through no fault of their own. They have to borrow money to pay bills and are then unable to re-pay the loan.
5. After falling down on the ice and twisting my ankle, I was in **ag_____**. I started screaming and crying.
6. An experiment has suggested that adults who are in **l_____** are far more likely to donate money to charities than those who are not.

ANSWERS

1. It is disgraceful that millions live in **poverty**, lacking basic necessities such as clean drinking water and adequate shelter.
2. We are so addicted to our screens that we are in **danger** of losing basic interpersonal skills and of becoming entirely self-obsessed.
3. Teenagers who are in **trouble** need support, not punishment. If an adolescent breaks the law or becomes addicted to drugs, she or he requires help rather than being thrown in prison.
4. Due to high levels of unemployment, many individuals find themselves in **debt** through no fault of their own. They have to borrow money to pay bills and are then unable to re-pay the loan.
5. After falling down on the ice and twisting my ankle, I was in **agony**. I started screaming and crying.
6. An experiment has suggested that adults who are in **love** are far more likely to donate money to charities than those who are not.

EXTRA

- to be disgraceful = to be terrible
- to lack = not to have enough of something you need
- basic necessities = things which you need in order to be able to live or survive
- interpersonal skills = the ability to communicate with other people
- to be self-obsessed = to be selfish; only to think about yourself and not about other people
- to find yourself = to realise you are in a situation you did not expect to be in

- **to be in debt** = to have borrowed money from other people or organisations and not to have the money to pay back
- **to twist your ankle** = to turn your ankle in a way which causes a lot of pain
- **to be in agony** = to be in a lot of pain
- **to donate money to charities** = to give money to organisations which help poor or weak people or animals

PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Look at the sentences below. Each sentence contains a phrase beginning with **on**. Try to complete each sentence by using one of the following words:

behalf; account; purpose; average; balance

1. If someone hurts another person on _____, he or she might end up in prison. However, if the injury is caused by accident, it does not seem fair to send the individual concerned to jail.
2. I am writing on _____ of the company, to invite you to attend a seminar on 13th February in our offices. (From a formal letter)
3. Some people never travel abroad, on _____ of their fear of flying.
4. The table shows that, on _____, house prices rose by approximately a third during the period in question.
5. I have considered the arguments related to the use of school uniforms and, on _____, I believe that it makes sense for educational establishments to allow their pupils to wear whatever they want.

ANSWERS

1. **On purpose** = intentionally; not by accident
2. **On behalf of** = representing (This phrase is used to show that you are not speaking, writing or acting only for yourself. You are representing a group or organisation)
3. **On account of** = because of
4. **On average** = the number you get if you add two or more things together and divide the total by the number of things you added is the **average**
5. **On balance** = after considering both sides of an argument (This phrase is used to introduce the opinion you reach after examining both sides of a debate)

PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Try to complete the following sentences. Each sentence contains a phrase with **under**:

1. The statistical information under **dis**_____ indicates that there is a correlation between obesity and diabetes.
2. There is a great deal of debate about how the law should deal with children who drink whilst under **a**_____.
3. When motorists cause fatal accidents because they are under the **in**_____ of drink or drugs, they should face severe punishment.
4. If you buy something from a store, the retailer is under no **ob**_____ to give you a refund if you have lost your receipt.
5. In some countries, if a person is under **sus**_____ of murder, police-officers have the right to hold him or her for up to three days before deciding whether to bring charges.
6. Those in power like to give the impression that everything is under **c**_____, even when it isn't.

ANSWERS

1. The statistical information under **discussion** indicates that there is a correlation between obesity and diabetes.
2. There is a great deal of debate about how the law should deal with children who drink whilst under **age**.
3. When motorists cause fatal accidents because they are under the **influence** of drink or drugs, they should face severe punishment.
4. If you buy something from a store, the retailer is under no **obligation** to give you a refund if you have lost your receipt.
5. In some countries, if a person is under **suspicion** of murder, police-officers have the right to hold him or her for up to three days before deciding whether to bring charges.
6. Those in power like to give the impression that everything is under **control**, even when it isn't.

EXTRA

- **under discussion** = the one which we are writing about at the moment (**under consideration** has a similar meaning)
- **a correlation** = a link; a connection (often between two numbers or pieces of statistical information)
- **obesity** = the situation in which a person is dangerously overweight
- **to be under age** = to be too young to (legally) do something such as drink alcohol
- **fatal** = causing death
- **under the influence of something** = behaving differently from how you normally behave, because something (such as alcohol) has affected you
- **a retailer** = a shop which sells goods
- **under an obligation** = to have a duty (often legal) to do something

- **under no obligation** = to have no (legal) responsibility
- **a refund** = money which you spent on goods or services, and which a shop gives back to you because you were not happy with the product or service you bought
- **a receipt** = a written document (often small piece of paper) which proves that you have paid for something
- **under suspicion** = suspected of doing something bad; believed by the police to have committed a crime
- **to hold** = to detain; to prevent from leaving
- **to bring charges** = to start a criminal process which could lead to a person being punished if found guilty
- **to give the impression** = to act in a way which makes others believe something

PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Look at the following sentences and decide whether it is better to use **in**, **on** or **at**:

1. The figures indicate that ____ the morning, electricity usage tends to be higher than ____ the afternoon. It rises ____ the early evening before falling back to negligible levels ____ night.
2. Surprisingly, the figures reveal that ice-cream sales are higher ____ July than they are ____ August.
3. Many commuters set off for work ____ around half past seven in the morning and return home ____ approximately eight o'clock in the evening.
4. ____ Saturdays and Sundays I usually have a lie in, because ____ weekdays I have to get up ____ the crack of dawn.
5. ____ the beginning of the week, I'm usually full of beans. ____ the middle of the week, I'm often flagging a bit and ____ the end of the week I'm usually out on my feet.
6. ____ 2008 The Olympic Games took place in Beijing. The event was acclaimed as a great success. ____ 2012, London was the venue. Once more, everything ran relatively smoothly.
7. It would be hard to have lived ____ the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries.
8. I am hoping to move to Seattle ____ two years' time.
9. ____ three weeks' time we will be sunning ourselves on the beach. I can't wait!
10. ____ the past, societies tended to be more collectivist. ____ present, there is a tendency towards individualism. It is difficult to predict what will happen ____ the future.

ANSWERS

1. The figures indicate that **in** the morning, electricity usage tends to be higher than **in** the afternoon. It rises **in** the early evening before falling back to negligible levels **at** night.
2. Surprisingly, the figures reveal that ice-cream sales are higher **in** July than they are **in** August.
3. Many commuters set off for work **at** around half past seven in the morning and return home **at** approximately eight o'clock in the evening.
4. **On** Saturdays and Sundays I usually have a lie in, because **on** weekdays I have to get up **at** the crack of dawn.
5. **At** the beginning of the week, I'm usually full of beans. **In** the middle of the week I'm often flagging a bit and **at** the end of the week I'm usually out on my feet.
6. **In** 2008 The Olympic Games took place in Beijing. The event was acclaimed as a great success. **In** 2012, London was the venue. Once more, everything ran relatively smoothly.
7. It would be hard to have lived **in** the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries.
8. I am hoping to move to Seattle **in** two years' time.
9. **In** three weeks' time we will be sunning ourselves on the beach. I can't wait!

10. **In** the past, societies tended to be more collectivist. **At** present, there is a tendency towards individualism. It is difficult to predict what will happen **in** the future.

EXTRA

- **To have a lie in** = to stay in bed longer than usual on a day when you do not have to get up (for work or school)
- **At the crack of dawn** = extremely early in the morning
- **To be full of beans** = to have lots of energy and enthusiasm (an informal, idiomatic expression which you could use in IELTS Speaking or IELTS General Writing Task 1 for an informal letter)
- **To be flagging** = to do things more slowly than before because you do not have much energy left (an informal, idiomatic expression which you could use in IELTS Speaking or IELTS General Writing Task 1 for an informal letter)
- **To be out on your feet** = to be so tired that it is almost impossible for you to stand (an informal, idiomatic expression which you could use in IELTS Speaking or IELTS General Writing Task 1 for an informal letter)
- **To acclaim** = to speak about something in a positive way. If something is 'acclaimed as a great success' ordinary people or people in power give the opinion that it was very good or it achieved its aims
- **To run smoothly** = to not have any problems; to be well-organised (usually used about an event)
- **Dawn** = the period of time in the morning when the sky is light but the sun still has not risen
- **Dusk** = the period of time in the evening when the sun has set but the sky is still not fully dark

PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

The following sentences refer to forms of transport. Complete each sentence with a relevant preposition:

1. Many teenagers and adolescents get ____ a motorbike or scooter without a helmet. If they have an accident and fall ____ , they could easily sustain a serious head injury.
2. I am petrified of flying. As soon as I hear the engines starting I want to get ____.
3. As soon as you get ____ a car, you should fasten your seatbelt. This simple act can prevent you from suffering a horrendous injury if the vehicle crashes.
4. I used to really enjoy getting ____ the bus every morning and chatting to fellow-passengers. These days I get ____ my car and travel on my own. It seems rather lonely at times.
5. I once fell asleep ____ a train and didn't get ____ at my station. It was a complete disaster because the train didn't stop again for two hours.
6. I have had enough of my job. I wish I could just get ____ a yacht and sail away into the sunset.

ANSWERS

1. Many teenagers and adolescents get **on/onto** a motorbike or scooter without a helmet. If they have an accident and fall **off**, they could easily sustain a serious head injury.
2. I am petrified of flying. As soon as I hear the engines starting I want to get **off**.
3. As soon as you get **into** a car, you should fasten your seatbelt. This simple act can prevent you from suffering a horrendous injury if the vehicle crashes.
4. I used to really enjoy getting **on/onto** the bus every morning and chatting to fellow-passengers. These days I get **in/into** my car and travel on my own. It seems rather lonely at times.
5. I once fell asleep **on** a train and didn't get **off** at my station. It was a complete disaster because the train didn't stop again for two hours.
6. I have had enough of my job. I wish I could just get **on/onto** a yacht and sail away into the sunset.

EXTRA

- A helmet = a hard hat which covers your whole head and protects you if you fall off a motorbike
- To sustain = to get (collocates well with **an injury**)
- To be petrified = to be extremely frightened
- On my own = without other people
- Sunset = the moment in the evening when the sun goes below the horizon and cannot be seen (the opposite of **sunrise**)

PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Look at the following sentences. Try to complete each sentence with a preposition which describes place:

1. The dog was sitting **u**____ the table and hoping that we would drop some food.
2. The person sitting in **f**____ of me at the concert kept turning round and talking to me. It was very annoying.
3. Poland is **a**____ the biggest countries in Europe.
4. Temperatures this month have been slightly **a**____ average.
5. The sun will go **b**____ the horizon at precisely seven minutes past nine tonight.
6. The house **o**____ ours is owned by a dentist.
7. I had a very uncomfortable flight. The child sitting **b**____ me kept kicking my seat. I couldn't sleep.
8. There are dark clouds **o**____ the city this morning.

ANSWERS

1. The dog was sitting **under** the table and hoping that we would drop some food.
2. The person sitting in **front** of me at the concert kept turning round and talking to me. It was very annoying.
3. Poland is **among/amongst** the biggest countries in Europe.
4. Temperatures this month have been slightly **above** average.
5. The sun will go **below** the horizon at precisely seven minutes past nine tonight.
6. The house **opposite** ours is owned by a dentist.
7. I had a very uncomfortable flight. The child sitting **behind** me kept kicking my seat. I couldn't sleep.
8. There are dark clouds **over** the city this morning.

PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Look at the following sentences. Try to replace the words connected with movement:

1. To get to my house, you need to walk **a_____** the river for about half a mile.
2. You shouldn't try to swim **ac_____** that river. There are crocodiles in it.
3. As soon as we heard the explosion, we started running **a_____ f_____** the bank. We were really scared.
4. I was walking **to_____** the centre when I got a text to say that the meeting had been cancelled.
5. You will have to climb **o_____** the fence because there isn't a gate.
6. In some cultures, it is considered unlucky to walk **u_____** a ladder.
7. It takes about ten minutes to drive **t_____** that tunnel.
8. I live at the top of a hill. I have to walk **d_____** it to get to work in the morning and back **u_____** it to get home at the end of the day.

ANSWERS

1. To get to my house, you need to walk **along** the river for about half a mile.
2. You shouldn't try to swim **across** that river. There are crocodiles in it.
3. As soon as we heard the explosion, we started running **away from** the bank. We were really scared.
4. I was walking **towards** the centre when I got a text to say that the meeting had been cancelled.
5. You will have to climb **over** the fence because there isn't a gate.
6. In some cultures, it is considered unlucky to walk **under** a ladder.
7. It takes about ten minutes to drive **through** that tunnel.
8. I live at the top of a hill. I have to walk **down** it to get to work in the morning and back **up** it to get home at the end of the day.

PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Look at the following sentences. Try to complete them by adding prepositions:

1. The general public is becoming increasingly concerned _____ rising global temperatures and the effect this is having on our climate. They are worried _____ the fact that sea-levels could rise and frightened _____ how this dreadful situation could affect them in the future.
2. Voters are quite disappointed _____ the government's failure to take steps to deal _____ the issue of terrorism. Many individuals are unhappy _____ the current situation and afraid _____ being killed by a terrorist bomb.
3. A recent study found that women tend to be keener _____ dancing, singing and the performing arts than men. Male respondents to the questionnaire were apparently more interested _____ socialising and playing sports.
4. Between 2002 and 2005 there was a sharp fall _____ the number of music CDs being sold. Simultaneously, there was a massive rise _____ music downloads from the internet. The surge _____ internet sales was astonishing.
5. The percentage _____ teenagers and adolescents who study and work at the same time rose in 2012. However, the quantity _____ older people in this category fell slightly. There was also a marked rise _____ the percentage _____ pensioners who enrolled on a course of full-time study _____ this period.
6. Research suggests that around four fifths _____ all smokers have attempted to quit but that only approximately twelve percent _____ those who have tried have been successful.
7. I completely disagree _____ the idea that everyone should be allowed to carry a gun.
8. It is essential that youngsters learn _____ the importance of money and personal finance. Teenagers and adolescents must know _____ credit cards, debt and how to manage their money.
9. I believe that whilst youngsters are _____ school, we should teach them a wide range of personal skills as well as academic ones. When they are _____ university, they should be taught how to prepare for the specific jobs they will do in the future.
10. Research suggests that most students can learn more successfully _____ the morning but that around a quarter _____ all youngsters study best _____ the afternoon. Perhaps surprisingly, just over ten percent _____ learners can assimilate information most easily _____ night.

ANSWERS

1. The general public is becoming increasingly concerned **about** rising global temperatures and the effect this is having on our climate. They are worried **about** the fact that sea-levels could rise and frightened **about** how this dreadful situation could affect them in the future.
2. Voters are quite disappointed **about** the government's failure to take steps to deal **with** the issue of terrorism. Many individuals are unhappy **about** the current situation and afraid **of** being killed by a terrorist bomb.
3. A recent study found that women tend to be keener **on** dancing, singing and the performing arts than men. Male respondents to the questionnaire were apparently more interested **in** socialising and playing sports.
4. Between 2002 and 2005 there was a sharp fall **in** the number of music CDs being sold. Simultaneously, there was a massive rise **in** music downloads from the internet. The surge **in** internet sales was astonishing.
5. The percentage **of** teenagers and adolescents who study and work at the same time rose in 2012. However, the quantity **of** older people in this category fell slightly. There was also a marked rise **in** the percentage **of** pensioners who enrolled on a course of full-time study **in/during** this period.
6. Research suggests that around four fifths **of** all smokers have attempted to quit but that only approximately twelve percent **of** those who have tried have been successful.
7. I completely disagree **with** the idea that everyone should be allowed to carry a gun.
8. It is essential that youngsters learn **about** the importance of money and personal finance. Teenagers and adolescents must know **about** credit cards, debt and how to manage their money.
9. I believe that whilst youngsters are **at** school, we should teach them a wide range of personal skills as well as academic ones. When they are **at** university, they should be taught how to prepare for the specific jobs they will do in the future.
10. Research suggests that most students can learn more successfully **in** the morning but that around a quarter **of** all youngsters study best **in** the afternoon. Perhaps surprisingly, just over ten percent **of** learners can assimilate information most easily **at** night.