Introduction

To the Student

How to Learn with The Preposition Book

The Preposition Book has been written to make English prepositions easier to understand and use. If you are studying alone and have questions about certain prepositions, you can check the Contents and study those parts alone. However, prepositions from earlier chapters are included in many exercises later in the book. Therefore, the best method is to start at the beginning and finish the text, completing all of the exercises. Be sure to look at each explanation carefully. Make sure you understand the explanation before you try to do the exercises that follow it.

The Preposition Book gives examples of the most common ways that prepositions are used in English. If you follow the examples in the book, you will almost always be correct. However, no rules of grammar in any language are absolute. Therefore, you shouldn’t be surprised if you occasionally find exceptions as you read and listen to English.

The Preposition Book contains a lot of exercises, and it covers a lot of material. There is an answer key at the end of each chapter for all of the numbered exercises and all of the Quick Check exercises. The Putting It Together sections and the Expansion Exercises at the end of each chapter are included to give you extra practice. They have no answer key, so you will want a teacher or a native English speaker to check your work on these exercises to make sure you are not making mistakes.

When you finish a chapter, take the Comprehensive Test and then check your choices in the Key to Comprehensive Tests in the back of the book. The Key to Comprehensive Tests tells you where to find explanations for every question. If you do not get at least 90 percent on a Comprehensive Test, review the chapter again. Reinforce your study of each part of the book by playing the software games every day.

When you have finished all the chapter exercises, don’t put the book away—keep it on your desk, ready to use. The Preposition Book is a reference that you can use every day to improve your writing and speaking because using the correct prepositions will help you sound more fluent.
To the Teacher

English prepositions are a well-known problem area for new language learners. The reason for this is plain enough: There are a tremendous number of prepositional combinations in English, and they seldom seem to follow any rules. While the typical ESL curriculum for beginners almost always includes a solid prepositional component, intermediate and advanced students often get less and less instruction with these forms. As important as they are, prepositions are not often the logical sub-focus of the major grammatical structures that teachers teach. The result is that students pick up what they can of prepositions along the way but remain weak in this area—and they are often quite aware of this weakness.

The Preposition Book is intended as a resource, guide, and workbook to address students’ questions and misconceptions regarding English prepositions. The text is as comprehensive as it is practical and treats beginning to advanced prepositional usage. However, the exercises included are not intended for beginning students. The text was written at an intermediate level to make it useful to the greatest number of students.

The Preposition Book relies on short explanations of each preposition or group of prepositions. These numbered explanations are often accompanied by charts, pictures, sentences, and word lists. The explanations exist to provide a logical framework for the text and to serve as a handy reference. Learning of prepositions takes place principally through guided practice that often includes a solid context.

The Preposition Book contains numerous simple assignments entitled "Putting It Together," which are designed to make the book easy to use as a classroom text because they can be done as a classroom activity or assigned as homework for a class. Finally, Expansion Exercises offer simple suggestions for extra homework practice, and Comprehensive Tests with answers keyed to the explanations provide a final progress check at the end of each chapter. Keys to comprehensive tests are found at the end of the book.

The Preposition Book also comes packaged with three software games to reinforce each explanation. The software makes it easy to assign homework that focuses on any part of the book. Teachers need only tell the students to play a game for any chapter, part, or combination of parts and print out their results. Students can also be asked to take a test on any chapter or any combination of parts and bring their scores to class. The software generates paper tests for any chapter or any combination of parts.

How to Learn Using The Preposition Book Software (Preposition Pinball and Other Games)

Getting the Most from the Software

Special effort has been taken to create the intuitive interface of The Preposition Book’s software, which makes it possible to use the software immediately without ever having to consult a manual.
Just by clicking the buttons, students and teachers should quickly understand how the software operates whether they are playing one of the games, taking a test, getting material from the Library pages, or doing anything else in the program. Students working in a lab can be asked to start the program, and typically with no further direction they will soon be involved in the game and learning about prepositions.

To get the most from Preposition Pinball and Other Games software, however, we offer some tips and ideas that can help bring the power of the computer to bear on both learning and instructing. What appears here is what can be considered the software’s manual. The rules of play and explanations of features in the program are described in the form of FAQs. Tips and ideas useful to both students and teachers are also provided.

Rules of Play
FAQ: What are the rules of play?
Answer:

1. Five Palms Preposition Pinball
   As in most pinball games, the game starts with five balls and is over when all the balls have been lost. One ball is lost for each incorrect answer, and one palm tree disappears from the screen at the same time. If the user is doing well, however, the game gives back balls and palm trees from time to time and the game can continue indefinitely. Bonus points are awarded randomly.

2. Carp Derby
   The user catches a small fish with each correct answer but loses one of the three large fish with each two mistakes. After six mistakes, the game usually ends, but if the player begins to do well for an extended period, the large fish are given back and the game can continue indefinitely.

3. Diamond Mine
   The user finds diamonds with each correct answer but loses one of three mining picks with each two mistakes. After six mistakes, the game usually ends, but if the player begins to do well for an extended period, the mining picks are given back and the game can continue indefinitely. Red diamonds are worth $5,000, blue ones $1,000, green ones $500, and yellow ones $100. A total profit tally is continually updated.

Presentation of Material
FAQ: How is the material presented?
Answer: There are hundreds of questions, and all are presented randomly. The software will never repeat the same question until all items have been used up. In addition, there is always an option
for an on-the-fly explanation for any item, and players can see mistakes and scores for the current session at any time.

The players also have a great deal of control over what material is practiced. It is possible to practice a single part of *The Preposition Book* or combine up to seven parts at once. Any combination is allowed. This makes the software appropriate for beginners and very advanced students alike.

**FAQ: Do the games exactly match the parts in The Preposition Book by letter?**

**Answer:** Yes.

**FAQ: If I don’t understand why my answer is wrong, what do I do?**

**Answer:** Just click the Why button if you have any questions. You will be sent to the rule that explains the preposition in the sentence. The number of the rule will have a square around it. If you don’t immediately see the exact explanation of your sentence, just scroll down a few lines. Clicking the Why button is an important part of learning with software.

**FAQ: What is the GO button on the two type-in games for?**

**Answer:** The type-in games (Carp Derby and Diamond Mine) are designed to be easy to use for touch typists. The GO button does the job of the RETURN or ENTER key on your keyboard. Clicking it will return your cursor to the typing field if it has ever moved and will give you a new question if you need one. Usually, however, just typing answers and hitting RETURN or ENTER are all you need to play the game.

**FAQ: How do I turn the sound on and off?**

**Answer:** On the screen for each game is a musical staff (音乐) button. Click it to turn the sound on and off.

**Testing**

**FAQ: How does the Make a Test! button on the Main Menu work?**

**Answer:** Just click the Make a Test! button on the Main Menu for complete directions. The tests are generated with random questions from any chapter or part of the book you select. It's easy to print out a neat 15-, 20-, or 30-point class test with this feature, and no test is ever exactly the same.
FAQ: How do you use the testing component in the software?

Answer: There is always an option for a 20-point quiz in any of the three games. Learners simply click the Take a Test button anytime during play. Each test is automatically corrected and graded. The carefully corrected test shows exactly how the student answered and which answer or answers are correct. All completed tests are immediately available for printing or viewing on the game page and ALWAYS accessible from the main menu by clicking View My Tests. All test results are also recorded with the game scores, which are accessible by clicking the Records button on the current game screen or on the Main Menu.

FAQ: Can learners print out customized tests that focus on the areas with which they need the most practice?

Answer: Absolutely. Since the software records every mistake the users make, these sentences can be printed out as custom-made quizzes that focus on the very aspects of article use that each student needs the most practice with. They can also be printed out as study sheets with the answers included.

To view and print mistakes, students simply click the Records button (on the current game screen or the Main Menu) and choose the mistakes option. To print out a custom-made quiz, students print the mistakes without the answers. To create a study sheet, students print out their mistakes with the answers included.

Here is a step-by-step procedure for teachers who are working with students in a lab and want to create study sheets and custom-made quizzes for their students:

1. Have the students play a game.

2. After they have played, ask them to stop and click the Records button for the game. (They can also access these records from the Main Menu.) The students will have the option to see their scores and test results or their mistakes.

3. To print a study sheet, the students simply print their mistakes with the answers included. (Have them click the Answers button to include the answers with the list of mistakes.) For custom-made quizzes, students print their mistakes without the answers. In either case, the students should be instructed to click the Number button to get a neat, numbered print-out. The software also requires students to enter their names whenever they print their mistakes, so in a lab setting it is conveniently clear whose quiz or study sheet is whose.
Records

FAQ: Does the software record every mistake that is made?
Answer: Yes, automatically—and it always gives the user the option to record all game and test scores as well.

FAQ: Does the software keep a record of my work after I quit the program?
Answer: No. The software reverts to its original state each time it is launched. This fresh start is especially important in a lab setting. Take a moment to print your test results, mistakes, and game scores whenever you wish, or copy them to the clipboard and paste them into any word processing document. Remember, you can print or copy any data you see in the software.

Library

FAQ: Where are all of the questions? Can I see them all at the same time?
Answer: Yes! Just click the Library button on the Main Menu. You will be sent to the Preposition Library and Archives page. There you can see every question from every Part (A–N) of the software. Just choose a part to see all of its questions. From this screen, you can also access your records and all of the explanations used in the software. On the Library page, you even can view and print the seven tests from the book along with their answer keys.

Technical Stuff

FAQ: I have a Macintosh. Is the Windows version of the software different?
Answer: No. The software is the same whether you have a Windows or a Macintosh machine.

FAQ: How do you install the software?
Answer: There is no installation process aside from copying the program to your hard drive. Just copy the software program from the CD to your desktop. Double-clicking its icon will launch the program.

FAQ: How do I uninstall the software?
Answer: Just drag it into the trash and empty the trash (Macintosh), or drag it into the recycle bin and empty the recycle bin (Windows).
Ordering Information

FAQ: How do I order additional copies of the software?

Answer: On the main Menu, click the Ordering button.

What Is a Preposition?

If you buy this book, sooner or later someone will ask you, “What is a preposition?” As a student of English, you can probably already answer with something like this: “Prepositions are little words like in, on, and at. They are very important to the meaning of a sentence, and they can be difficult for people who are learning English.”

Your definition is good enough. It is much clearer than the definition you will find in the dictionary, and it answers the question better. Don’t change it. Instead, expand your knowledge of prepositions by considering the following about prepositions.

1. A preposition usually goes before a noun or noun phrase (a noun and the words that go with it).

   I went to Alaska.
   \[ \text{I saw Alice at Janice's party.} \]
   \[ \text{I'm not familiar with this subject.} \]

2. A preposition sometimes consists of more than one word.

   I walked across the street.
   \[ \text{Shannon lives next to the fire station.} \]
   \[ \text{In spite of the rain, we went on a picnic.} \]
3. A preposition sometimes seems logical.
   Most people come to work in their cars.

4. A preposition sometimes seems illogical.
   I came here on the bus. (You are really in or inside the bus and not on or on top of it.)

5. A preposition is sometimes optional.
   When I’m at home, I feel safe. Correct
   When I’m home, I feel safe. Correct

6. A preposition is needed in some sentences.
   The men went to work. Correct
   The men went work. Incorrect

7. A preposition may not be needed in some types of sentences.
   I went home. Correct
   I went to home. Incorrect

8. A preposition sometimes can be replaced by a synonym.
   I live near you.
   I live close to you.

9. Like other words in English, a preposition sometimes has an antonym.
   Jane walked into the room and then walked out.
   Why are the lights on? They should be off.

10. A preposition sometimes appears with an adjective.
    good at
    tired of
    harmful to
11. A preposition sometimes appears with a verb.

   borrow from
   talk to
   leave for

12. A preposition is sometimes related to the grammar of a sentence.

   I haven't seen you since last year.  perfect tense
   The book was written by Mark Twain.  passive voice
   She won't graduate until June.  negative idea

13. Some words look exactly like prepositions but are called particles. For example, the word up can be a preposition or a particle.

   A. I walked up the stairs.  up is a preposition
   B. I called up a friend.  up is a particle

Why is up a particle in sentence B but a preposition in sentence A? People who study grammar might say that up in the first sentence is related to the noun phrase the stairs. Therefore, they say it is a preposition. They might say that up in sentence B is related to the verb call and therefore is a particle. But ESL students don’t need to worry about this difference very much. Learning the difference between particles and prepositions is not as important as learning how to use them both correctly. Therefore, The Preposition Book does not focus on the grammatical difference between particles and prepositions. Instead, the two are taught together.

14. The word up in the sentences that follow is not technically a preposition, but it looks exactly the same. Particles like up in two-word and multiword verbs (also called phrasal verbs) often need to be in the correct place in the sentence.

   Call up Johnny.  Correct
   Call Johnny up.  Correct
   Call him up.  Correct
   Call up him.  Incorrect
15. A preposition (or a particle) sometimes completely changes the meaning of a word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two-Word Verb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>call off</td>
<td>to cancel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>call on</td>
<td>to ask a student to answer in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>call up</td>
<td>to telephone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What have you done for us?  (something good)

What have you done to us?  (something very bad)

OK, stop. Now, you know enough about what prepositions are. Start Chapter 1 and practice using prepositions.