

## Prepositional Phrases

In a sentence prepositions show the relation of one word to another word. Prepositions require an object to complete them, typically a noun or a pronoun. A preposition and its object is called a prepositional phrase.

**The Prepositional Phrase:** If a word in the table below does not have an object, then the word is not *functioning* as a preposition.

Prepositions do not change form.

Prepositions are not without evaluation challenges. For instance, a preposition paired with a verb is called a phrasal verb, a preposition can follow, rather than precede its object.

The words below can be *used* as a preposition in a prepositional phrase.

about	below	in spite of	regarding
above	beneath	instead of	since
according to	beside	into	through
across	between	like	throughout
after	beyond	near	to
against	but (meaning except)	of	toward
along	by	off	under
amid	concerning	on	underneath
among	down	on account of	until
around	during	onto	up
at	except	out	upon
atop	for	out of	with
because of	from	outside	within
before	in	over	without
behind	inside	past	

The words above can be used as prepositions. In order for one of these words to be considered a preposition, it must be part of a prepositional phrase. Here are some examples of a prepositional phrase:

**over the hill**  
**behind the door**  
**at Mary's house**  
**without your coat**  
**during lunch**  
**atop Mount Everest**

Notice that the prepositional phrase contains *no verbs*. Generally, they contain an adjective, a noun or pronoun and they can also contain a gerund. The noun or pronoun is the **object** of the preposition. Prepositional phrases can also contain conjunctions to join two nouns or pronouns as in this example:

**underneath sand and rock**

The advantage of being able to recognize prepositional phrases in sentences is that neither the subject nor the verb will ever be a part of the prepositional phrase. Consider this sentence: "**The coat on the chair is mine.**" If we eliminate the prepositional phrase, "**on the chair**" then we can easily see that *coat* is the subject and *is* is the verb.

"**The coat ~~on the chair~~ is mine.**"

Using the list of prepositions or our memory, we would make up phrases for the words such as:

*after the fall*  
*behind my chair*  
*beyond the sunset*  
*amid the crowd*