

Prepositional Phrases

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A prepositional phrase consists of a PREPOSITION and an OBJECT (a noun or a pronoun). The preposition connects its object to the rest of the sentence, often by indicating location or direction. If you take out the preposition, you must take out the noun or pronoun object as well. The preposition and its object function as a unit—a prepositional phrase. The sentence must include (or exclude) the entire unit.

The cup on the table is full.

He walked through the door.

SOME COMMON PREPOSITIONS

about	beneath	in	over
above	between	like	through
across	by	near	to
around	down	of	toward
at	during	off	under
behind	for	on	up
below	from	out	with

TWO OR MORE PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

A sentence often contains two or more prepositional phrases.

At the beach, they parked near the pier.

She is the daughter of a woman from a ranch in Wyoming.

A PREPOSITION MUST HAVE AN OBJECT

A preposition always has an object. If it does not have an object, it is not a preposition.

The house was torn down. (Down has no object. Down is part of the verb torn.)

The paper was torn down the middle. (Down has an object: middle. Down is a preposition.)

The light went out. (Out has no object. Out is part of the verb went.)

The fly went out the window. (Out has an object: window)

Read the following sentences aloud. Notice that each preposition connects its object to the rest of the sentence.

1. The fruit is in the basket.
2. They tied the rope around him.
3. The scenery at the lake was beautiful.
4. He stepped off the porch.
5. She went to the concert.
6. The book on my desk is new.
7. By the stream lay a child.
8. Near the child lay a dog.
9. Across the stream I watched the child and the dog.
10. For the sake of modesty, I left her alone.
11. Under the willow they sat like statues.
12. With great feeling he apologized to her.
13. We sat on the steps of the building.
14. Tell me about your plans.

15. There is no anger between us.
16. Above the flower hovered a hummingbird.
17. Up the lazy river we rowed.
18. Captain Nemo traveled beneath the surface of the ocean.
19. Over the freeway and through the smog, to Grandfather's house we go.
20. By listening to the symphonies of Mozart, we hear melodies of great beauty.