

1.6 Prepositions

A **common preposition** is a word that shows the relationship between a noun or a pronoun and another word in the sentence.

The man swam *under* the bridge. (*Under* connects the idea of *swam* and *bridge*.)

She walked *down* the aisle. (*Down* connects *walked* and *aisle*.)

Julie walked *around* the campus and *toward* town. (*Around* connects *walked* and *campus*. *Toward* connects *walked* and *town*.)

Here are the most commonly used prepositions:

aboard	about	above	across
after	against	along	among
around	as	at	before
behind	below	beneath	beside
besides	between	beyond	but
by	concerning	despite	down
during	except	for	from
in	inside	into	like
near	of	off	on
onto	opposite	out	outside
over	past	since	through
throughout	till	to	toward
under	underneath	until	up
upon	with	within	without

But is a preposition only when it can be replaced by the word *except*. So in the sentence, “All *but* Teddy went inside,” *but* is a preposition since it connects *All* and *Teddy* and can be replaced by the word *except*.

A way to get to know these fifty-six prepositions is to remember this sentence: *The plane, Prepi I, flew _____ the clouds.* Any single word that can logically be placed into this space is a preposition, so the only words that you would still have to memorize are those that do not logically fit into this space. Compose the list of these words, memorize the Prepi I sentence, and you will know your prepositions!

1.6 Prepositions (*Continued*)

Another type of preposition is the **compound preposition**. It does the same as a common preposition but is composed of two or more words. Here are the most common compound prepositions:

according to	ahead of	apart from	as of
aside from	because of	by means of	in addition to
in back of	in front of	in place of	in spite of
instead of	in view of	next to	on account of
out of	prior to		


Adverb or preposition? The difference between a preposition and an adverb is that an adverb answers the questions, *Where? When? How? To what extent?* by itself. Both common and compound prepositions need more than just themselves to answer the same questions:

He fell down. (*Down* is an *adverb* because it takes only one word to tell where he fell.)

He fell down the stairs. (*Down* is a *preposition* because it takes more than a single word to tell where he fell.)

Trey walked aboard. (*Aboard* is an *adverb* because it takes only one word needed to tell where Trey walked.)

Trey walked aboard the ship. (*Aboard* is a *preposition* because it takes more than one word to tell where Trey walked.)

 **WRITING TIP** Know when a word is a preposition and when it is an adverb. In the sentence “The captain walked aboard,” *aboard* is an *adverb* because it does not start a *prepositional phrase*. In the sentence “The captain walked aboard the ship,” *aboard* is a *preposition* that begins the *prepositional phrase*, *aboard the ship*. Look for the *prepositional phrase* to check that the word is a *preposition* and not an *adverb*.