



Prepositions

Definition: A preposition is a word that combines with a noun to form a prepositional phrase. This prepositional phrase functions adjectivally or adverbially in relation to another noun or verb in the sentence.

Quick Review:

Adjectives modify nouns, and answer the questions: *what kind? which one? how many?*

Adverbs modify verbs or other adjectives, and answer the questions: *how? how often? when? where?*

Common Prepositions: about, above, across, after, against, along, along with*, amid, among, around, at, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, besides, between, beyond, but (meaning *except*), by concerning, down, during, except, for, from, in, in spite of*, into, like, of, off, on, on account of*, over, past, since, through, throughout, to, together with*, toward, under, underneath, until, unto, up, upon, with, within, without

**Sometimes, a group of words may act as a preposition*

Examples of prepositions in sentences:

1. The tree fell [**during** the storm].

- “during” is the preposition that combines with the noun phrase “the storm” to create the prepositional phrase “during the storm”
- This prepositional phrase answers the question: **when?**
- Therefore, the prepositional phrase “during the storm” is functioning adverbially to modify the verb “**fell**”.

2. It wasn’t [**until** I graduated] [**from** college] that I began to feel optimistic [**about** my future].

- “until” is a preposition that heads the prepositional phrase “until I graduated”. This prepositional phrase answers the question: **when?** Therefore, the prepositional phrase is functioning adverbially to modify the verb phrase “was not”.
- “**from**” is a preposition that combines with the noun “college” to create the prepositional phrase “from college”. This prepositional phrase answers the question: **where?** Therefore, it functions adverbially to modify the noun “graduated”.
- “**about**” is a preposition that combines with the noun phrase “my future” to create the prepositional phrase “about my future”. This prepositional phrase answers the question: **what?** Therefore, the prepositional phrase “about my future” is functioning adjectivally to modify the noun “optimistic”.